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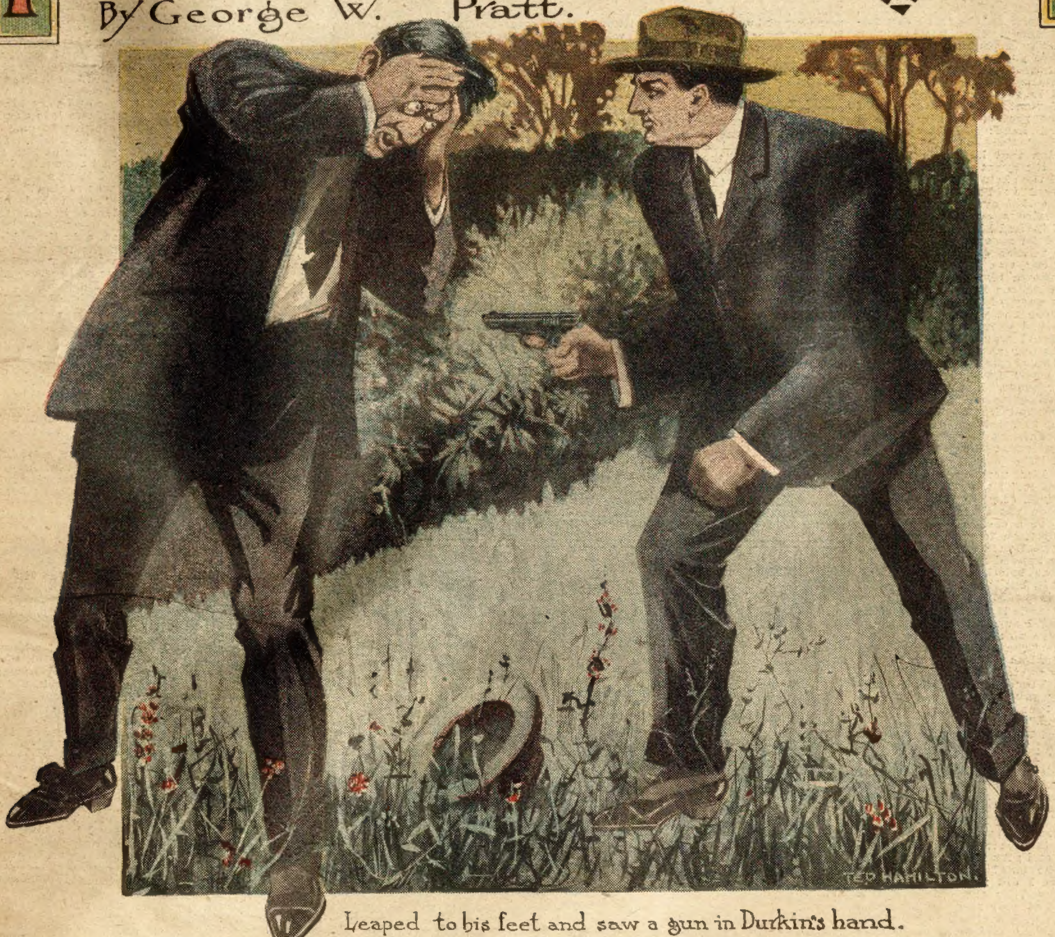
The Face in the Storm.

By George W. Pratt.


TED HAMILTON.

Leaped to his feet and saw a gun in Durkin's hand.

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MYSTERIOUS tragedies always interested me, but in the one of which I am going to tell I had a very personal interest. Deadwood, long familiar with the brawls of miners and the shooting affrays of gamblers, and not entirely unaccustomed, let it be related, to the speedy execution of some suspected offenders without the formality of a trial by jury, was not easily disturbed; but the murder of a pretty girl, the sister of a much beloved pastor in the town, was more than it could gulp at a single draught.

When the people awoke one morning to the realization of the distressing tragedy, their excitement knew no bounds. No stranger against whom could be turned a reasonable amount of suspicion would have been safe there a single hour.

Alma Leichtman, the victim of a midnight assassin—murdered while she was sleeping peacefully in her brother's home, the parish house which adjoined the church edifice—had nursed the miners in times of sickness and aided the poor in distress, and was looked upon as the "good angel" of the rough mining town. Her brother, the Rev. Henry Leitchman, was respected above all men, and another brother, Vincent Leichtman, who lived with them, was employed in a clerical capacity by one of the mining companies, and was regarded as a young man of sterling qualities and much uprightness.

The Rev. Leichtman had been called away to a distant parish in the hills, and the Rev. James Walling, from a neighboring parish, was called to the Deadwood church temporarily, as that was the more important of the two. A party had been held in the parish house on the night of the murder, but the guests had all departed, and the Rev. Walling, Vincent Leichtman, and his beautiful sister had retired to their separate rooms on the second floor. These rooms were all connected, one with the other, by doors, and a smaller door in the girl's room opened into the attic above the kitchen, at the outer end of which there was a small window.

Shortly after midnight, when a fierce storm was raging, and the sky was punctuated at intervals by blinding streaks of lightning, the Rev. Walling was awakened by the striking of a match, and turning in his bed saw, as he described, a hideous face peering at him through the door of the girl's room.

"Vincent, Vincent, there's a burglar in the house!" he exclaimed, in a startled manner.

Vincent Leichtman leaped from his bed, ran through the girl's room into the attic through the small door which he found open, and to the window at the end. He peered out and saw a ladder upraised to the window. He saw no one running away and heard no one.

Returning, he found his sister dead in bed. On the floor was a heavy rock covered with the crimson of the girl's lifeblood.

Vincent Leichtman notified the police by telephone, and when Chief of Police Dave Atwood and two assistants arrived there, they entered the house without knocking, through the front door which had evidently been left unlocked.

By daybreak the storm had subsided. Chief Atwood had carefully weighed the stories of the two men, and making a close inspection of all the surroundings, placed the Rev. Walling under arrest, and formally charged him with the commission of the brutal murder. But for the persistent declarations of Vincent Leichtman of his belief in Walling's innocence, and the fact that the accused man was a minister of the Gospel, it is not unlikely that the jail would have been stormed that very day and the prisoner hung up to one of the tall trees in the yard.

I have said that I was personally interested in the tragedy; rather be it said, I was interested in the Rev. Walling.

Many years before, following the sudden death of my wife in the East, when I came as a young man into the Black Hills country, hoping to escape from my deep sorrow, I arrived at the inopportune time that an old miner had been beaten, bound, and robbed of his accumulation of gold washings. I, the only stranger in the neighborhood, was immediately suspected; and unable to give a satisfactory alibi and being entirely friendless there, I was selected as the one to pay the summary penalty for the crime.

The arrangements were all completed, and it seemed that my time had surely come. When they were ready to drop the noose over my head, a young man with black hair and an earnest face stepped quickly from the woods, and raising his right hand implored the men to halt. I never will forget the earnestness of his plea in my behalf, and his declaration in conclusion that, if I were to die, it would have to be over his dead body. The men weakened under his magnificent defense of my cause, and I was spared the ignominy of a felon's grave. That man was the Rev. Walling.

Now that his face was furrowed and his hair was gray, he was placed in the position where I thought I might repay my debt to him. I had complete confidence in his innocence, but I must admit that the known facts of the tragedy were his most stubborn accusers, and these Chief Atwood had woven into a web of circumstantial evidence that was well-nigh convincing.

Having retired from active affairs, after long years of panning out gold-dust, I lived in comfortable circumstances at the ——Hotel. I was seated in one of the large chairs of the lobby, reading the paper, on the third day following the tragedy, when my attention was attracted to a young man of probably thirty-five years who was standing at the register. Selecting the best accommodation the hotel afforded, he left his baggage to the care of one of the bellboys, and went out very abruptly. I looked at the register, and read in a large, uneven hand: "James Durkin, Chicago."

My deduction that he was a reporter from one of the great city dailies, sent on to unravel the skein of the mysterious murder, proved to be correct. I encountered him that evening in the hotel barroom. Desirous of making his acquaintance, I invited him to have a drink with me, and he accepted. There, over the bar, we became quite friendly, and before the hour was passed it seemed that I had known him for a long time. In keeping with the line of his profession he was easy of conversation, and quick to inspire one with confidence.

We had talked over the murder mystery in a casual way, but he gave no opinion of his own as to the guilt or innocence of the accused minister.

"I presume you have already sent a story to your paper," I said.

"Yes, I filed quite a long story this evening," he replied. "It is a murder that is going to receive a good deal of attention from the newspapers, I believe. There are a great many interesting things about it."

"I should like very much to know what you sent in," I said, "if that is not asking too much of you."

I wrote it on the typewriter," he replied "and have a carbon copy with me. I have no objection to your reading it."

At his suggestion we repaired to his room, and he handed me the copy of his story. It was bristling with interest, every line of it, but it was not just what I had hoped it would be.

"You have made it rather dark for the Rev. Walling," I suggested.

"I have given no opinions of my own," said Durkin. "That is the story of the authorities, just as it purports to be, and the interview quoted there with the Rev. Walling and Vincent Leichtman are exactly as they gave them to me. I have not yet had time to make an investigation first-hand."

"I believe you will be able to find something that will be in the Rev. Walling's favor," I said.

"I have Chief Atwood's promise that I can have the key to the parish house tomorrow morning," said Durkin. "The house has been kept locked since the tragedy, and nothing has been disturbed. It is my intention to make a thorough study of all the mute evidence that remains there, and give it the credit that it deserves. The chief offered to accompany me, but I did not want my own judgment biased by the opinions of a man who had already made up his mind, and asked to be permitted to go alone. You see I came armed with credentials from the Chicago chief of police, and Mr. Atwood has granted my request."

Enjoining confidence upon the newspaper man, I told him the story of how the Rev. Walling had once saved my life, and thus divulged my great interest in the case.

"That story is very interesting," said Durkin. "I can see very many bad links in Chief Atwood's chain of evidence, and it might be that when we have all the facts and circumstances in hand, we arrive at an entirely different conclusion from his. In that event, I may be able to induce you to allow me to use the story you have just related. At all events, I should like to have you accompany me to the parish house tomorrow."

I suggested that my interest in the Rev. Walling might bias my judgment as to the significance of the circumstances found there, and that as opinions are sometimes catching, his conclusions might not be free from influence.

"You can have no already formed opinions," he said, "for you do not know what the circumstances are. I should be pleased if you would go."

I was more than happy that I was to be the one permitted to accompany him.

There was something uncanny, but withal very interesting, about this mission to the parish house in which I had been invited to participate. Places where grewsome deeds have been done are always haunted with a sinister atmosphere. The key Durkin had received from the police chief admitted us through a side door from a spacious porch. The blinds had all been closely drawn, and an unnatural light pervaded the rooms.

Durkin, with myself following closely, went directly to the girl's room where the murder had been done. The evidence of the awful crime was very pronounced. There was the crimson pillow, over which had oozed the victim's lifeblood, and on the floor, where it had first been found, the blood-stained rock. Muddy tracks stretched across the floor and back past the little door to the attic window. On the dresser still lay the girl's jewelry and a purse containing some money.

Durkin opened the various doors that connected the three bedchambers.

"This was Vincent's bed," he said, indicating through the door to the left. "That was Walling's. It was here the minister saw the peering face in the light of a match. The night was stormy, and except for the lightning was inky dark. Vincent, aroused from sleep by a startled warning of burglars, leaped without hesitation from his bed, and with the courage of a lion pursued the assassin, without yet knowing the awful work that had been accomplished, through the dark attic. Although the ladder does not reach to within eighteen inches of the window-sill, he peered into the blackness of the night and saw it there.

"There is something radically wrong about this. That is not the true story, or, at any rate, the whole story, and I think Chief Atwood is right in discrediting it. Beyond this much, Walling refuses to discuss the murder, or to give any personal opinions about the case. He does not seem to attempt to divert suspicion from himself, except by making the bald statement that he is innocent."

I was willing to admit that Walling's attitude in the whole affair seemed unusual, if he were innocent, and yet I could not bring myself to believe him guilty.

Durkin produced a small folding ruler from his pocket, after surveying the scene for several seconds, and very carefully measured distances and the size of the various foot-tracks, observing the latter very closely and counting them. Then he went to the sill of the attic window, on which there was the print of a shoe heel and the indentation of the pegs in the wood.

"Now let us go to the outside," he said.

"I am informed," he continued, when he reached the yard, "that the ladder was taken from behind those flowerpots, indicating with his finger a row of plants ranged along the side of a small shed. In the the darkness a stranger would not have been likely to find it. Walling knew where it was, as he had used it the day before the crime when trimming a tree."

Durkin then went to the ladder, and inspected every rung from the one nearest the ground to the one nearest the window.

"There is but one muddy track on the lower rung," he said. "On all the others there are two, and on the next to the top rung three."

He measured these as he had measured the tracks upstairs.

"It is the theory of Chief Atwood," said Durkin, "that this ladder, the open window, and the muddy foot-tracks are all evidence manufactured to throw the police from the true scent and give credence to the theory of robbery.

"The chief is in error there. No man ever manufactured such evidence as this The assassin went up this ladder, stepping upon every rung, and when taking out the window stood with his two feet on the next to the top rung. Returning after committing the murder, he again stepped on every rung except the bottom one, and he escaped that because he jumped, and here he lighted in the soft mud. Now let us follow his flight."

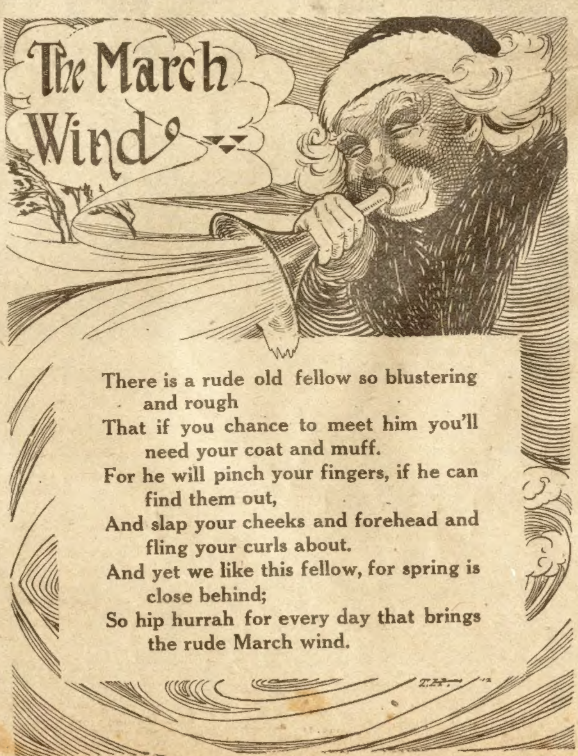
With the eye of a train observer Durkin followed the foot-tracks around to the west of the house, across a soft flower-bed, and to the front stoop. He was unable to trace them any farther, as the yard in front was a blue grass lawn.

"Now," said Durkin, as if thinking aloud, "could the murderer have been a burglar? There is nothing especially about this house to attract robbers. A burglar would have carried some weapon other than a chance stone he might pick up. If a burglar, why did he not take the jewelry and money that lay on the dresser? How could any burglar have known that he could reach the bedrooms through the little attic window? Certainly it does not appear from an outside view of the house that a person could enter in that way. How would the burglar have found the ladder when the night was so dark that a person could hardly see his hand before his face? If the murderer was a burglar, why do his footprints lead from the ladder directly around the house to the front, instead of through the dark churchyard where he could find quick concealment?"

Durkin then led me again into the house, entering as we had before by the side door.

"This household always used this door," said the reporter. "There is no key to the front door, and it was always kept fastened by this catch here on the inside. When Chief Atwood came, in response to the summons of Vincent, he found this door unlocked, and entered without knocking.

"Mr. Manning," said Durkin, a smile of self-confidence spreading across his features, "we are coming toward the truth of this affair. That is all I care to say at the present time."



There is a rude old fellow so blustering
and rough
That if you chance to meet him you'll
need your coat and muff.
For he will pinch your fingers, if he can
find them out,
And slap your cheeks and forehead and
fling your curls about.
And yet we like this fellow, for spring is
close behind;
So hip hurrah for every day that brings
the rude March wind.

We returned to the hotel, and following the noonday meal, he expressed his desire to see Vincent Leichtman, and left me alone.

I confess that, although having the same opportunities to observe that he had had, I was greatly puzzled, and could arrive at no opinion as to what his conclusions had been. Various circumstances, coupled with the presence of the jewelry and the money on the dresser of the girl's room, argued against any theory or robbery in my mind, and yet he had expressed his belief that the assassin had entered from without, and escaped as he came.

The evening air had been refreshed by an afternoon shower—one of those sudden thundershowers that are of such frequent occurrence in the Hills country, I was seated with my paper in the barroom when Durkin entered and invited me to take a drink.

"Have you got off your story?" I asked.

"Yes, a pretty good story," he replied, "but not as good a story as I could have sent. Let us go to my room. We can order our refreshments there."

I went with him.

"Mr. Manning," he said, when, we were seated before our glasses, "have you ever heard about a peering face being seen at unseemly hours, frightening men and women around here?"

"Yes, for more than a year such stories have been told, more particularily by those living along the gulch road. I have always regarded them as fancies, though. The face—according to these stories, a greenish face and very hideous—has appeared at windows late at night and always when a storm was on."

"Don't you recall," said Durkin, "that Walling saw a face peering at him from the girl's room, which he described as a hideous face, and that it was at a time when a fierce storm was raging?"

"Yes," I replied, "but I had never placed much confidence in all those stories of the face."

"I found two women, only three blocks from the Leichtman home, who were frightened at that awful face peering in through their windows on the very night of the tragedy," said Durkin.

"You may be on a good track then, and will be able to save Mr. Walling yet," I replied.

Durkin smiled faintly.

"Are you familiar with the details of the murder of the timekeeper down at the R—— Mining Company's plant some time ago?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied. "It was something less than a year ago. He was alone in the office, when he was killed, and with a rock, too. I recall now that it had stormed during the night."

"That mystery was never solved?"

"No, no one was ever arrested for it."

"The Rev. Walling was not here then?"

"No," I replied, "he has only been in this parish a few days."

"Then he could not have committed that murder?"

"No, no one ever thought of such a thing. I am sure he could prove that he was not near here."

"Was robbery the motive in that crime?" he asked.

"The murdered man," I explained, "had received his salary that very day, but it was found intact in his pocket. Nothing had been taken from him."

"Do you not see the similarity between that crime and the one on which we are engaged?" asked Durkin, very earnestly. "The night, the storm, the rock, the lack of motive? The man who murdered the timekeeper was the assassin of Alma Leichtman."

"Will you be able to prove it?" I asked, eagerly.

"Prove it?" he said. "I must prove it."

"Do you know," he continued, "I saw that peering, hideous face today? I was walking," he went on, "along that lonely road to the north, when that sudden thunderstorm came up. Vincent Leichtman was with me, for I had invited him to come. That face appeared only for an instant—a face, it seemed, born of the storm itself, hideous, terrible—a face reflecting an unconquerable madness, a mania to kill."

Durkin was very earnest, his set eyes fairly piercing me.

"Can you swim, Mr. Manning?" he asked, abruptly.

"I am accounted a good swimmer," I replied, wondering at the sudden turn he had taken.

"Tomorrow you must be prepared to go into the water, if occasion should demand it," he said. "You know where the stream widens into a sort of lake, and there is a clump of stubby evergreens on a precipitous bank there?"

"That is the loneliest spot in all this country," I said.

"Well, you are to hide yourself in that clump of evergreens," he said. "You can see and hear from there all that is said and done. I will be there at ten o'clock tomorrow morning, and you must be already concealed. My inquisition must there be carried to its final point, and you, Mr. Manning, must be prepared to go into the water. It may not be necessary, but it is best to be prepared."

I retired to my own room more puzzled than I had ever been before.

At the breakfast table Durkin and I sat together.

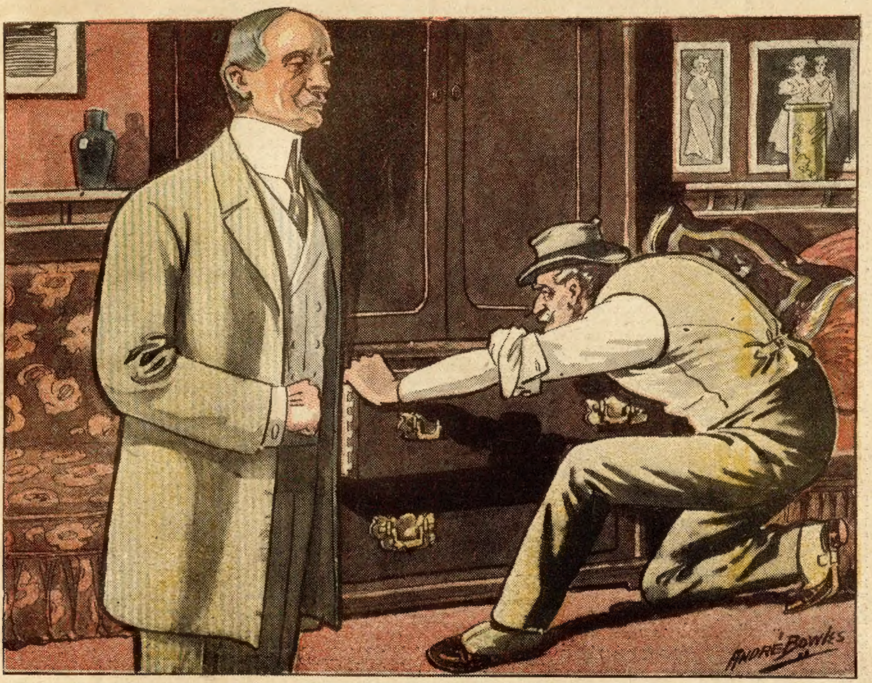
"You will be out there as we arranged last night, will you?" he asked.

(Continued on page twenty.)

THE BARON'S REVENGE;

Or, THE CASTLE'S GHOST

By PIERRE DASTARAC



"Oh, here is the spring!"

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CHAPTER IV.

THE DOCUMENTS.

THE next morning at breakfast the Baron and Armand met again. It was easy to see by the tired eyes of each that neither had slept. Armand advanced timidly toward his father, longing to express the love and veneration which the story of the night before had caused to fill his heart, but he dared not, something in the cold, set face forbidding all outward signs of affection. He simply bowed low before the hunchback as they took their seats at the table. During the meal Le Bossu spoke on indifferent subjects, as though to drive from the mind of each the haunting memory of the conversation of the night before. It was only at the close of the meal that, rising, he said:

"I leave for London this morning. Will you please see at what time the express leaves for Calais?"

The young man glanced at his father in astonishment and began, "I thought, monsieur, that I was to have you with me for some days, at least?"

"You will upon my return. Please get me the information I have asked of you."

"Yes, monsieur," and Armand left the room, while Le Bossu lit a cigar. When Armand returned, a few minutes later, he found his father standing by the window, looking out into the street, a deep frown creasing his brow, a strange look in his eyes, and a stranger smile on his lips.

"The train leaves at 10:30, monsieur," announced the young man.

Le Bossu started like one suddenly recalled to himself, and turning said, "Very well; have the carriage ordered for ten," and he made as though to leave the room.

"Will you be gone long, monsieur?" Armand ventured to ask.

"I don't know—a week—maybe only a couple of days. It all depends."

"Do you want me to accompany you, monsieur?"

"No, I go alone," and Le Bossu passed out of the room, leaving Armand perplexed, almost hurt, that his father should still treat him as a stranger, and not make him the confidant of his plans.

"And heaven knows," thought the young man, bitterly, "that after the story told me last night, I long to aid him avenging my dead mother."

At ten o'clock the Baron de Lasouche departed without giving Armand any further explanation. Immediately after reaching London, Le Bossu went to a strange-looking building near the docks, on four of the upper windows of which one could read in faded gilt letters the words: "John Soren, Private Detective Agency."

He went up the two flights of shaky old stairs like a man used to the place. He paused before a door on which was written the name "John Soren." He knocked, and some one from within called to him to enter. He found himself in a mean reception-room, in which were seated some half-dozen men and women, several of whom had the appearance of people far above the mean surroundings. It was evident they were anxious to hide their identity, the women wearing heavy veils, the men having their hats drawn over their eyes. Le Bossu walked to the desk, behind which was seated a little dried-up man of some sixty years of age.

"Give my card to Mr. Soren. He is expecting me," said the hunchback, in excellent English.

The man glanced up for the first time, then rose hastily to his feet, bowing with every mark of respect.

"I beg your lordship's pardon," he said. "I didn't recognize you. I will tell Mr. Soren of your arrival."

He disappeared in the inner office, while the other clients of the strange agency looked in surprise and envy at this deformed creature, who nevertheless had such great influence over the automaton at the desk, whom up to this moment nothing short of an earthquake, seemed to have the power to impress. They were not long given a chance to examine the object of their curoisity, for Mr. Soren himself appeared in the doorway of the inner office, an obsequious smile on his lips.

"Ah, sir; so glad to see you again. Step into the office, sir. I did not expect you so early, sir; otherwise, I should have given orders to have you admitted at once sir," he said.

Without answering this flow of words, Le Bossu entered the private office, and taking a seat, turned to Mr. Soren with the laconic question: "What's the report?"

"I have followed your instructions to the letter, sir."

"Have you succeeded?"

"Yes, sir. Lord Winters is almost ruined, though no one knows it yet. All the mortgagable property is mortgaged for almost its full value, while his notes are out for more than double what he is worth. Should he be forced to pay suddenly tomorrow, he would not only be utterly ruined, but disgraced as well."

"What does he do?"

"What you wish he should do, and what I had some difficulty to induce him to begin—he gambles!"

"And he loses?"

"Enough to put him further in debt, though occasionally we see to it that he wins a considerable sum. This brings him back to the table, and keeps him there. Such, I believe, were your instructions."

"Have you prepared the papers and the map I ordered?"

"Yes, sir. Here are the papers. As to the map, it has been placed in the spot you ordered," answered Soren, as he handed Le Bossu a large envelope.

The hunchback took it, and drew out several papers yellowed by age. He turned them over several times, then said:

"They have the right tint. The work is well done. No one could think to contest their antiquity."

He opened and read them over carefully. The papers consisted of a letter, two or three legal-looking documents, and a manuscript of a dozen pages, written in a feminine hand with ink that years seemed to have faded. While Le Bossu was examining the papers, Soren was saying:

"I was very particular to have every detail perfect. I don't believe one can find in France or elsewhere an expert who could detect that these documents were manufactured during the past year, instead of being centuries old."

"You are right. I am fully satisfied," said Le Bossu, refolding the papers and placing them in his pocket, adding as he did so: "When can you arrange that I meet Lord Winters?"

"Any time you wish. He is in such desperate need of money, so near ruin and disgrace, that he will seize at a straw to save himself."

"Very well. Make it some time tomorrow afternoon, and let me know the hour," ordered Le Bossu, rising.

"Do you wish him to go to your hotel, or will you go to his home?"

"I will go to his home."

"Very well. I shall let you know as soon as the arrangements have been made."

With a slight inclination of the head, Le Bossu left the agency and returned to his hotel.

The Soren Detective Agency was far more than its name indicated, for while professing to deal exclusively with detective work, its founder and owner was ever ready to give his aid to private vengeances and outside work of every sort, the whole, however, being done in such a way that no law was broken or disobeyed. It was legalized villainy, and therefore could not be stopped. During the past fifteen years Baron de Lasouche had employed Soren to work out that part of his vengeance he could not attend to himself, the taking, bit by bit, of the whole of the fortune for which Winters had in his youth sacrificed the life of his beautiful cousin, Lydia Winters, better known to the reader as Nereje. While the Baron remained alone with his thoughts and tragic memories in the haunted castle, Soren, in London, was preparing the coming revenge. The point was now reached where Le Bossu was forced to take an active part.

In the evening Soren sent word to Le Bossu that the appointment was for the following afternoon at half-past two. At the appointed time the two men were sending up their cards to Lord Winters. They had been admitted to a small side parlor of the big and gloomy mansion, where the unfortunate nobleman was hiding in his misery.

Such a meager fire was burning in the hearth that it barely took the chill off the room. It was evident it had but recently been built, most likely in honor of the visitors. An old gray-haired servant had answered the door and admitted them, saying his master would be down in a few minutes. Le Bossu's heart was beating so madly as to cause him to pant for breath. He was not afraid of being recognized; the athlete of the past and the hunchback of the present were so different that no one could think of connecting the two, but he was about to come face to face again with the man who was the direct cause of his life's misery, the one who had robbed him of youth, of strength, of the woman he loved; the one who for years he had followed with a relentless vengeance, the fatal climax of which was now so near at hand. No wonder he was moved; no wonder emotion blanched his cheek.

They were not kept waiting long, for they had scarcely settled themselves in their chairs when the velvet portieres before a side door parted, and a middle-aged man, with hair prematurely white and form broken and bent with the weight of trouble rather than of years, entered the room. His eyes, heavy with many a sleepless night, looked out at the visitors with a haunted look such as is to be seen in those of the deer at bay, as he makes his last stand against the pack.

Le Bossu gazed at his victim with evident satisfaction. In the first glance he saw that he was already well avenged, that the man's ill-gotten wealth had not brought him happiness. Soren had risen when Lord Winters had entered, and had formally introduced the two men. Winters had extended his hand in salutation, but Le Bossu had pretended not to see it, bowing deeply before the nobleman. Soren, wishing to bridge over the momentary embarrassment, caused by the hunchback's refusal of the extended hand, said hurriedly:

"Lord Winters Baron de Lasouche has an important revelation to make to you He came expressly from France to make the communication in person. I will let him speak for himself."

"Lord Winters, Baron de Lasouche has frightened look at the hunchback. Was he some unknown creditor who was coming to hasten the ruin and disgrace he knew were coming, but against which he was still struggling? Le Bossu guessed his fear, and a light of unholy joy lit his eye. The next instant he had subdued its fire, as he said, with calculated slowness:

"Some fifteen years ago I inherited, among other properties belonging to the Lasouche family, an old and partly ruined castle near F——. The castle was said to be haunted, and was therefore shunned by everybody, for which reason I decided to make it my home. One look at my deformity will tell you the reason. Well, to make a long story short, some ten years ago, while searching in an old trunk, I came upon some documents which concern my family and yours, and which date back to the year 1427, when a Marie Jeanne Renee Amelia de Lasouche became the bride of your ancestor, John Williams Walker, tenth Lord Winters of Worchester. By this marriage a certain number of property transfers were made by the family of one of the contracting parties. It was the unrecorded documents of these transfers that I found in the old trunk, and of which I now wish to give you notice."

Lord Winters had become paler and paler as the other proceeded, for nothing in Le Bossu's words indicated to whose property these transfers referred, and he saw himself deprived, perhaps, of the little left him as his sole means of salvation. Hoarsely he demanded:

"Are you sure these documents are genuine—that no fraud is attached to their drawing up?"

"If I were not sure, sir, I would not be here, since these documents transfer the castle previously mentioned and all its furnishing to your family."

Lord Winters leaped to his feet with a muffled cry, in which relief, joy, and surprise were mingled.

"My family!" he stammered: "Are you sure you are not mistaken?"

"Absolutely sure. See for yourself," and the hunchback handed Lord Winters a part of the papers given him the day before by Soren.

Winters took them with trembling fingers, a quiver of overpowering emotion causing his body to shake as with ague. If these papers were genuine, he was saved. That old castle, though partly in ruins, must be worth something; the old furniture it contained might bring large sums if properly disposed of—enough, perhaps, to help him meet the most pressing and dangerous of his outstanding debts. In his desperate position anything which gave hope was eagerly seized upon. He looked over the documents carefully; then, looking up, he said, as he gazed in suspicious wonder at the man who had given them to him: "They seem genuine."

Le Bossu understood his thought, for he said with an amused smile:

"You are wondering if I am in my senses thus to reveal a secret which I could have kept forever by simply destroying these papers, but if you remember, I have already stated that these documents were found by me ten years ago; yet only today do I bring them to you. Could I have done otherwise, I would not have done so, but the fact is, that, together with the papers you are holding, I also found an old manuscript, in which was revealed the existence of a treasure buried somewhere in the haunted rooms of the castle. The plot or map for the locating of this treasure was given the young bride, with instructions to hide it in some secret place of her English home. The manuscript ended with a copy of a letter from Lady Winters, telling where she had hidden this map."

"Have you that manuscript with you?" Lord Winters' eyes were glittering.

"Certainly."

"Give it to me. I should like to read it."

Le Bossu laughed:

"My lord," said he, "I am neither a fool nor a lunatic. You will never see the manuscript until you promise to make me a partner in the spoils, when once the treasure is located. I am willing to let you have the castle, but I must have my half of the treasure. Without that map hidden in Winters Manor in Ireland, it cannot be located. Could it have been I would not be here today. For ten years have I tried. There is nothing generous or philanthropic in my makeup, let me assure you."

"You say the map is hidden in Winters Manor?"

"Yes, in a place where only a clairvoyant would think to look for it. Only a double sight could locate its hiding-place."

"And you will tell where it is if I promise to give you half?"

"I will go with you to Winters Manor; I will find the map; then we shall go together to the haunted castle near F——. There we shall hunt for the treasure together, and when found we will divide it equally. On these conditions alone will I ever consent to let you know where the map is hidden. I know nothing of your honesty, but I do know that you need money, and sometimes the need of money makes men forgetful of moral principles, I don't want to run any risks."

"Sir!" Lord Winters advanced toward Le Bossu threateningly.

"Don't be angry, my lord," said the other, calmly, "I mean no personal insult. I am simply stating a well-known fact. I know it to be true from personal feelings, for could I have reached the place in Winters Manor unaided, I would never have come to you. You see I am frank."

For a few seconds longer Winters hesitated. The whole story was so strange, so unreal, that he was afraid. Still, on second thought, what did he risk? A trip to Ireland with this hunchback. If the map was not found, what was lost? A few pounds spent in traveling. Had he not spent many a goldpiece with as great a chance of loss? He would try; his position was too desperate to allow him to do otherwise.

"When do you wish to go?" he asked, abruptly.

"As soon as possible—tomorrow morning by the first train, if you wish it."

"Very well, I will be ready. Shall I come for you, or will you come for me, or shall we meet at the station?"

"I will come for you."

"I shall be ready."

Five minutes later Le Bossu and Soren were on the street, and the hunchback was saying: "The map is surely in its hiding-place?"

"Yes, and has been for over a week."

"Then all is well. He is now in my power. I will see you when I return. Good-by."

CHAPTER V.

THE SECRET DRAWER.

After a sleepless night spent in uneasy thoughts of the meeting of the day before and of the coming search, Lord Winters rose the morning after Le Bossu's startling revelations, still wondering, still uncertain about the sincerity of the man who had come thus to offer him a fortune. Everything about the hunchback was strange and uncanny—his story of the finding of the documents and the manuscript, his deformed and grotesque form, his hard, unbending voice, and the occasional glitter of his eagle eye, which from time to time seem to be traversed with bluish flames of mental lightning. Everything inspired fear. Still Winters' resolution did not change; he would see the adventure through, be the consequence what it might. At the worst, he could but lose his life, and the last few months had not been happy enough to cause him to prize existence very highly. He would risk all to win all. Nevertheless, he decided to take every precaution to defend himself. When dressing he slipped a loaded revolver and a small dagger of Indian workmanship into his pocket, as he thought:

"That way I shall have the means of defending my life."

In a subconscious way he seemed to sense that his life was at stake, and he was preparing to defend it. While waiting for Le Bossu to come, he summoned his old servant and gave him his instructions.

"Markin," he said, "I am going to Winters Manor. If I am not back within a week, and you have not received further orders from me, wire at once my cousin, Sir John Maintland, with the Duchess de Brials in Toulouse, telling him to come immediately! When he arrives, you will give him this letter, and act according to the instructions found within," and Lord Winters handed the old servant a letter he had written after arising that morning, in which he had related his adventure of the day before with the hunchback, and told of the quest on which they were going, giving his relative the order to come at once to the Manor and notify the police should he not find him there. If his strange visitor of the day before had any intention of making away with him, once the precious map was found, the crime would not long remain undiscovered.

The outside bell, ringing at this moment, announced that the hunchback was punctual. Old Markin hastened to admit the visitor, while Lord Winters took his hat and gloves, and cast a last look in the mirror, to make sure that his toilet was faultless as usual.

Descending, a few moments later, he found Le Bossu waiting for him. The Baron arose and bowed, with the same icy politeness of the day before, saying:

"If you are ready, my lord, we will go at once, as I do not think we have allowed ourselves more than enough time to make our train."

"I am at your service. Markin, carry my grip to the carriage."

The two men entered the waiting cab, Lord Winters saying in an aside to his man as he entered the carriage: "Don't forget my orders, Markin."

"Have no fear, my lord." And the carriage drove away.

The journey from London to Dublin, and then on to Winters Manor, near Carlow, passed without incident, the hunchback barely speaking a dozen words outside of those necessary to give orders for meals or baggage. This silence and the strange look in the man's eyes filled Winters with uneasiness. Was the man insane? And were they going on some wild-goose chase? A thousand times during the journey Lord Winters asked himself this question, while he felt in his pocket for the reassuring touch of his revolver.

If Le Bossu guessed the fears which filled his companion's mind, neither his face nor his actions betrayed the fact. He remained as cold and as impenetrable as a sphinx. At Carlow the travelers were met by the gamekeeper of the Manor, who had been summoned by telegraph. He drove them out to the family residence, which Winters had not visited since the tragic death of his young wife some twelve years before, the young woman having died from injuries received in a runaway.

As he neared the old home, all the sad memories of the past surged over Winters' heart in a bitter flow. He had loved the dead woman deeply, and her death seemed to have been the beginning of all his misfortunes. The year after her death, his son, whom he idolized, was drowned in a mysterious manner, while swimming in a pool only a few feet deep. Then had come the loss of his fortune, bit by bit, until today he found himself in such desperate circumstances that he had consented to follow this half-mad cripple in an insane hunt for a treasure, which most likely existed only in the man's sick brain.

It was dark when they reached the old mansion. Winters, more nervous than ever, feared to trust himself alone in the big dark house with his silent and mysterious companion, so he asked of the gamekeeper, "Have you two extra rooms at the lodge which we could have?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Show us to them. I don't care to sleep in the mansion where the rooms have been closed so long. What do you say, Baron?"

"I am at your service, sir. Whatever are your desires are also mine," answered the hunchback, with a bow.

While the gamekeeper went to the house to inform his wife of the master's wishes, Lord Winters turned to Baron de Lasouche, saying: "I think we had better wait until morning before searching for the map. Daylight would be better than candlelight for making a search."

Again Le Bossu bowed, saying, "As you wish."

Lord Winters did not sleep that night. A thousand wild fancies, seething in his brain, caused him to strain his ears to catch a possible stir in the next room, where Le Bossu slept. What if the man should leave in the night, enter the mansion, find the precious map, and then make his escape, thus robbing him of his share of booty. Then he would laugh at himself for crediting the wild story. He was a fool to have come so far. Thus passed the night. With the first rays of dawn he descended into the garden, eager for a breath of air. So much depended on the result of the day's search that every nerve in his body was tingling with combined dread and hope. He was suddenly recalled to himself by a hard voice back of him saying. "You are quite an early riser, my lord."

He turned. Le Bossu was standing in the path back of him, his grotesque form appearing more deformed in the crude light of the rising sun. Lord Winters gave an involuntary shudder, as if the blast of winter had replaced the balmy freshness of the summer morning.

"I might say the same of you," Winters hurried to remark, wishing to hide the inexplicable feeling of terror which the hunchback's presence always caused him.

"I rarely sleep more than three hours a night," answered the Baron. "I go to bed late and rise before dawn. I arose unusually late this morning, because I feared to disturb you."

While talking they had walked on. They now found themselves nearing the old mansion, the red-gabled roof of which appeared among the leafy bowers of the giant oaks which surrounded it. A sudden thought came to Winters. Why not end further suspense by searching at once for the map. He felt in his pocket; the revolver was still there. Turning to Le Bossu, he said:

"It is almost an hour until breakfast. Would you care to start the search for the treasure map at once?"

"I was about to suggest this to you. If the map is where the script says it is, we can locate it in less than ten minutes."

Winters' heart was beating so fast that he dared not trust himself to speak, for fear of betraying his emotion, so he hurried on up the steps of the mansion, the door of which he opened with a key he carried in his pocket. He would soon know whether he was saved.

They entered. The dead air of the house, closed for many years, struck their nostrils the minute they stepped into the semi-darkness of the large and gloomy hall. The furniture, shrouded in white covers, appeared like the ghosts of the dead past. Lord Winters became livid, as the blood flowed back to his heart, driven there by the bitter memories which this return to the old home brought to him. Here he had brought home his bride; here his son was born; here he had lived for five short happy years; here his young wife had died! So affected was he that he remained transfixed in the center of the hall. Le Bossu watched this emotion with keen satisfaction. It was just what he wanted. Let the victim relive in memory what he had gone through in reality. Like the cat playing with the mouse, the man enjoyed lengthening the agony, taking fiendish pleasure in watching on the working face the imprints of the tortures endured within the aching heart. After a time he said, abruptly:

"Shall we start the search my lord!"

A pistol shot would not have startled Lord Winters more than that hard voice which awoke him from the painful memories of the past. Tremblingly he stammered:

"Yes, yes at once. Where do you want to go?"

"To the blue room," came the answer.

"The blue room!" echoed Winters, in hoarse agony. "My—my wife's room!"

"There's where the manuscript says the map is concealed. I believe all the successive Lady Winterses occupied that room," replied Le Bossu, with assumed indifference, not seeming to heed the other's suffering.

"Yes," stammered the unhappy man, in reply, "for the birth of their children." Then he added, in an agonized whisper. "It was there where she died!"

"If you do not care to come up, I can go alone. All you need do is to indicate the way," offered the hunchback.

Greed for gold and his desperate need caused Winters to refuse this offer, for he walked resolutely to the stairway leading to the apartments above, saying, "Come!"

Silently the two men climbed the stairs; as silently they walked down the hall of the upper story; and finally they paused before a closed door. Winters was in the lead, and the hunchback, following close, guessed by the man's heavy breathing what he was enduring. Before the door he hesitated, all the sad memories of his wife's tragic death surging over him in a bitter flood. He saw her again bleeding, disfigured, the breath coming with difficulty from the crushed bosom, the eyes, still conscious, bidding him a farewell the lips could not pronounce.

"My God, how I loved her!" broke from Winters, forgetful in his agony of the hunchback's presence.

"Others have loved as deeply, yet have been robbed of their mates by a fate as cruel, maybe crueler, than the one which struck you," answered Le Bossu, darkly.

These words recalled Winters to himself. He opened the door and entered. Everything was as the dead woman had left it. A dainty dressing sack lay on a chair, on the dressing table were the thousand and one knickknacks and toilet preparations belonging to a refined woman. This was too much for Winters, unnerved as he was by days and weeks of anxiety. With a great sob tearing his bosom, he sank on a chair, his head in his hands.

The hunchback watched him with folded arms, a smile on his lips, a flash of fiendish joy in his eyes. This man, who had robbed him of what he held most dear on earth, was enduring in his turn some of the agony he himself had endured years before. When he had feasted long enough on the sight of the other's suffering, he said, abruptly:

"My lord, I must ask you to open the wardrobe. The map is said to be in a secret drawer concealed in the bottom."

Winters rose, wild eyed and livid. The wardrobe, which still contained the dead woman's clothes! Must he undergo the ordeal of seeing them again? Must strange hands touch these precious relics of his one dream of love? Words of protest rose to his lips, but died ere they were uttered, as the thought of his coming ruin flashed through his numbed brain. Without a word he handed his bunch of keys to the hunchback; then he waited while the other opened the door. He kept his eyes fixed on the floor, not daring as yet to trust himself to see those dainty clothes, which had once enhanced his wife's natural beauty. He knew he would break down completely, and somehow he felt his companion would rejoice instead of sympathize. He dared not let this hard, sneering man view the still open wounds of his heart. But the hunchback was determined not to spare his enemy one moment of suffering. After opening the door and seeing the moth-eaten clothes hanging within, he realized how the ruined condition of this finery of the past would affect the one who had once loved their owner. They would serve as a symbol of the destruction of her physicial form decaying in the grave. With a smile, Le Bossu turned to Winters, saying:

"I need your assistance, my lord. Kindly light a taper and hold it for me, while I search for the secret spring."

Winters had gone too far to retreat. Nerving himself for the ordeal, he did as he was bidden, the pallor of his face and the beads of perspiration on his brow alone attesting of the suffering he endured. The hunchback took his time, enjoying this lengthening of the man's agony, watching, unobserved, the workings of the white, drawn face, as the eyes looked upon the havoc those years of neglect had wrought upon the dainty apparel, now falling to pieces through the work of moths and time. It was the grim symbol of death he was viewing—that silent but relentless destruction of the physical atoms which follows the leaving of the soul. When Le Bossu felt the agony had lasted long enough, he said, "Ah, here is the spring."

Startled by the voice, almost frightened by the spoken words breaking in thus upon his thoughts, Winters looked down at the kneeling cripple, who was still working at the floor of the wardrobe. He pressed a button, the bottom of the floor sprang open, revealing an opening in which were several papers yellowed by age. In a second Winters returned to reality, as he realized with a sudden thrill of hope that perhaps among those musty papers was salvation.

"Is the map there?" he asked, hoarsely.

"We shall soon see," replied the hunchback, as removing the papers from their hiding-place, he again closed the secret drawer, and rose once more to his feet, going to the window to better see the papers.

After a pause, which he made purposely long, to lengthen Winters' suspense, he said: "The manuscript letter told the truth. Here is the map."

"Let us go in the garden to look at it," suggested Winters, who felt he could not talk of such material things in this room, which seemed to him to be inhabited by the spirit of the dead woman.

"As you wish," answered the hunchback.

Together they left the room and descended into the garden, after having once more closed the house.

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this strange story. You will find it strong and captivating to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

Another View.

A man but lately married went out to post a letter, and as the lamps had not been lit in the suburban road in which he dwelt he could only dimly see his way. A short distance up the road he met, as he thought, his wife, who had been out to tea; and as he went past he just whispered:

"All right, my dear; I shall be with you in a minute."

Immediately after he had said these words he saw the woman turn a horrified look upon him and then hurry away; and the idea occurred to him that it was not his wife at all, and that in the darkness he had made a mistake. He decided to say nothing about the matter, and quickly disappeared.

When he returned home he found his wife awaiting him, and she at once greeted him with the words:

"Oh, George, I have had such a frightful experience! I was just coming down the road when a man tried to stop me, and said, 'All right, my dear; I shall be with you in a minute.' I ran home, found you were out, and I've been so much alarmed."

George was just about to explain, when an idea came to him.

"What sort of a man was it?" he asked.

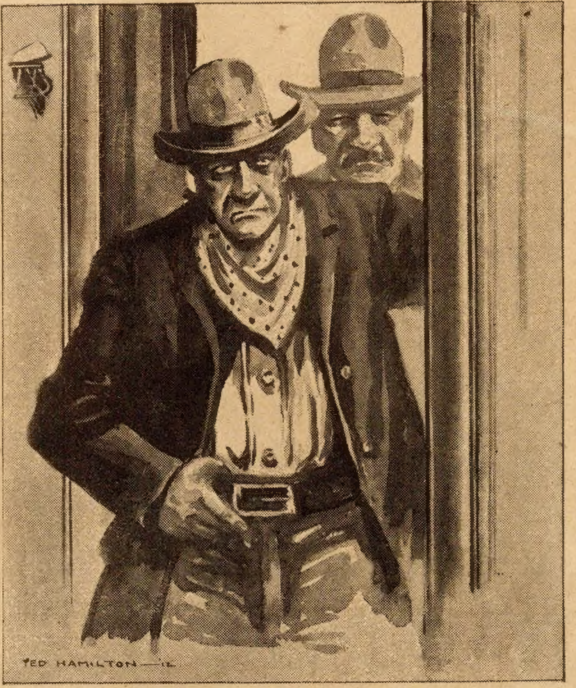
"Oh, replied the young wife, "I saw him quite plainly, and a more villainous face I never beheld in my life. He was a perfect monster, with crime stamped on every feature."

George decided it was best to say nothing.

OUT WEST STORIES

KILLED IN MERCY

By Paul Crissey



"They gave him life at hard labor," said he.

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HE SHOT him," concluded the smooth-shaven man, and he leaned back as he finished his tale.

"Killing isn't as popular in Texas as it once was," argued the heavily-set man who had listened to the story. The other men in the smoking compartment nodded appreciatively. We were only a few hours out from Kinkaid, and the smooth-shaven man had been entertaining us with one of the old-time stories of bravado shooting once so common in the Lone Star State.

As the story came to a close I noticed that two men, sitting close together in a corner of the compartment, glanced at each other significantly. One of them, a big, aggressive-looking Texan, smiled peculiarly to himself and whispered to his companion. Extremes had met in these two men, and I wondered at the plaintive eagerness with which the smaller of them listened to the story. A wistful something in his eyes attracted my attention when I, in surprise, heard him open his lips to speak for the first time since boarding the train with his big friend.

"Killin' ain't popular," said the little man, shortly, "but sometimes is shore is mighty necessary. I knowed one man that got up against it, and he shot. But the law has come to Texas, and it got him. It was this away." He bent forward while his big companion settled back in the leather seat and glanced idly out of the window. A queer expectancy filled the room. The conductor stuck his head in the doorway, scented probable excitement—at second hand, but excitement nevertheless—and sat down.

* * * * * * *

"Morgan was his name," said the little man. "He married a slip of a girl that didn't know much beyond the kitchen doorway, but it was all he needed. He got to drinking, and the first they knew he was given an invite to clear out. He sold his stuff, and the two of 'em, on ponies, started across the prairie, intendin' to wind up at some ranch.

"It was some hot. Morgan's pony was a sure-footed beast, but the caballo he got for his wife was a rust-eaten little roan that had served good time and was ready to kick off most any day. Goin' down a deep arroyo—gully—her horse stumbled, and Morgan cursed her. Probably it was all right, but he had made her tote most of the things he had saved from the wreck of things at their home—pans and kettles and such. It was more than the pony could stand.

"Bessie Morgan took the curse and kept her mouth shut. A few minutes later his pony stumbled, and she smiled. He seen that grin on her face and it made him hot.

"'What 'n hell you laughin' at?' he asked, kind o' ugly.

"'Pears to me you can't tend your horse no more'n I can,' she said, kind o' foolish like.

"Now, ef Morgan 'd hed any sense he'd kep' still at that, but he'd been drunk most the night before, and his head was buzzin' like a hive o' bees.

"'You little fool!' he said, 'You ain't got sense enough to wear a poncho in th' rain. Don't you call me down on riding'.'

"She might a took this as a warnin', but she didn't have brains enough more'n to know when the stove got hot.

"'What'd you marry me for, then,' she shot back.

"'God knows,' says Morgan. 'I don't.'

"Bess got huffy at that, an' tried to think o' somethin' real mean to come back with, but she didn't get a chance. That headache of Morgan's was gettin' in its work, and he was as ugly as a branded bull.

"'I'm talkin' now,' says he, 'an' you keep your mouth shut. You know what I married you for, but I made a blame big mistake. You tend to your knittin',' says he, 'an' I'll tend to mine.'

"They rode on for a while, but the devil was burnin' inside th' girl. She was real sassy when she wanted t' be, and maybe suthin' else was hurtin' her. Leastwise, she pretends t' feel cut up at what he says. Finally she got t' cryin'.

"'Mebbe,' she says, kind o' soft like, 'you'll change your mind when I'm gone.'

"Buck Morgan looked at her sharp.

"'Don't git them dam' fool notions in yer head,' he says, quick. 'I may be sorry before then.'

"She sniffles at this an' dabs her eyes with one o' them little bit o' hunks of cloth a woman carries. Buck had married her out o' th' city.

"Both the ponies was good an' tired by this time, and Buck, he got a nervous hearin' her snifflin' there beside him. Morgan ain't much on havin' a woman cry, and it gits on his narves. Purty soon they comes to another washout gully, a deep one, and the sides are all soft an' crumblin'. Without lookin' back at his wife, Buck plunges down, his lines tight, and his horse's hoofs a-plowin' two big furrows as he slid down th' bank. His wife came close after him. She was cryin' heavy by this time, an' the tears must 'a' blinded her, for she didn't see th' curves nohow, an' first thing Buck knows a big black hunk o' wife and horse goes plungin' down by him, rollin' over and over and throwin' th' dirt like a snow-plow up North.

"Morgan lets out a cry, and his horse takes one or two jumps to th' bottom of the arroyb. He jumps off and stumbles over a few loose rocks in the hard bottom. His wife's pony is stone dead—neck busted in two places, an' Bess was underneath him.

"By this time his headache was gone. Buck was plumb scairt, an' he got to work in a hurry. He tries to roll over the dead pony, but it ain't no use, so he hikes back after his own horse and gets his rope off the saddlehorn. Then he takes a turn around his saddlehorn and drags th' dead pony from his wife's body.

"'Bess!' he yells, lookin' down at her. But she don't answer none. The little handkerchief is soaked in blood, and her eyes are closed. Th' foolish grin on her face is gone, and she looks tired to him.

"'Hell!' he whispers; 'now ain't this hell!' But that don't do no good, so he hikes over to his saddlebag an' gits out a canteen. He dumps part o' th' water on her head, and he tries to put a few drops on her tongue, an' it trickles down and mixes with the blood on the front of her dress.

"'Bess!' he calls again, but she don't answer. He starts to open her waist, an' finally he puts his hand over her heart.

"'She ain't dead!' he tells himself over and over, 'she ain't dead.' With that he starts to work rubbin' her hands, an' finally, not knowin' just why he does it, he leans over an' kisses her.

"He starts back when her eyes open. Bess stares at him for a minit an' then sighs, heavy-like.

"'I—I cain't ride,' she says, with a little smile, but he nods his head. 'You're right,' says she.

"'T' hell with that,' says Buck Morgan, quick. 'How bad hurt are you?'

"She looks him straight in th' eyes.

"'Try my arms,' says she.

"But Buck's eyes was brimmin' with arm and then the other. They come up, a-bendin' crazy-like. He slowly shakes his head.

"'They're both broke,' says he, in a whisper.

"'An' my legs, too, Buck,' she says, quiet-like, 'one of 'em, anyway.'

"But Morgan, he looks away across the prairie, thinkin' about Kink—about San Reo. It's full fifteen miles, and not a house atween. With both arms and a leg broken there ain't much chance of gettin' his wife to a doctor. So he swears under his breath.

"Bess looks up at him. She'd been watchin' him close.

"'It ain't no use, Buck,' she says, slowly, 'I'm a-goner. There's somethin' stickin' my lungs. Guess it's a busted rib. I ain't never goin' t' leave here, Buck, I know.'

"'Yes, you are!' comes back Buck, quick. 'I'll fix up a way. I got to,' he says, lame-like.

"But his wife shook her head.

"'You're through with me now, Buck.'

"He flushes up at that; then, seein' how her face is white and solemn, with th' pain of her hurts, he bows his head.

"'I—I didn't mean what I said—back there,' he says hoarsely.

"But Bess shakes her head.

"'You've been sayin' it so long, Buck, that I kind o' got t' believin' it myself.'

"Morgan looks down at her face. It was gray, like alkali, and little rings was makin' themselves around her mouth. She looked kind o' purty, layin' there on her back, with the big arroyo wall loomin' up behind her, and a sob got stuck in Morgan's throat. He seen that she must be sufferin' suthin' awful, but she don't say nothin' about it.

"'Kid,' whispers Buck, 'does it hurt—much?'

"'Like hell!' says she.

"He nods and catches awkwardly at one o' her hands. She winces when he moves her arm, but she don't make no noise and he keeps hold of it. Finally she sighs softly and looks up at him. Mebbe she is surprised t' see that his eyes is filled with tears, but she don't say nothin' about it.

"'Look here, Buck,' she says, suddint, 'how'd you like t' be in my place? Both arms gone, one leg gone, and your life escapin' out o' yer lungs every second—a little bit at a time?'

"Morgan shudders. He's a little fellow and he can't stand the blow.

"'I reckon,' he answers, soft-like, 'I reckon I'd mostly want to die—quick.'

"She closed her eyes for a second.

"'That's right, Buck,' says she. 'That's just what I want.'

"Morgan starts up at that, for he sees he's walked into a trap.

"'You might as well,' she says coolly. 'If it was a horse you would. I cain't be moved—I'm dyin' slow—an' it hurts somethin' awful.'

"But Buck's eyes was brimimn' with tears and he couldn't look at her.

"'I cain't—do that!' he begged.

"'You got to, Buck,' she answered, determined-like.

"Morgan shakes his head, and a stream of tears rolls down his face.

"'I could 'a' done better by you,' he says soft, and his face shows a hull lot o' regret.

"'You can even it up—now,' she says. 'It'll be a mercy—a one kind thing, Buck—think of it—one kind thing to sort o' square our account.'

"'I cain't—I won't! God! She—she goes back to his belt an' touches for a minute on his blue steel gun. 'I just cain't,' he says in a whisper.

"'You wouldn't treat a dog like that,' she hangs on.

"'My wife,' he gasps, 'I can't shoot my wife!'

"'You got to, Buck,' she says, slow.

"Buck gets up and staggers off.

"'I cain't—I won't! God! She—she wants me to!'

"Purty soon he comes back. She looks kind o' sunken and her eyes are bright. Buck can see where her teeth have sunk into her lips, to keep from hollerin', and he goes and cries like a baby. The lines on the girl's face are deeper now, an' Buck can see that she must be sufferin' suthin' dreadful.

"'Square everything, Buck,' she whispers. 'I been good t' you, but you made my life hell ever since I married you.'

"Buck nods.

"'It was th' drink,' says he.

"'It was your selfishness,' says she. 'Do it, Buck; it'll only take a second, then you can go. Please!'

"'It's murder,' croaks Buck, for his voice is husky with fear.

"'I'd do it myself' says Bess, 'but I cain't use my hands none.'

"'It's murder,' says he.

"'It's mercy,' cries the girl.

"Buck stares up at the sky. He's thinkin' a hull lot—he's a-weighin' th' chances he's got. A doctor was fifteen miles away. His wife is sure t' die in th' end. She is slowly dyin' now—painfully, and it will be—mercy. His hand reaches around his belt and touches on the hard rubber grip of his gun. He pulls it out and glances down the sight. Then he breaks it and looks into the chamber. Five shiny brass heads meet his eyes. He looks over to his wife. She is a-lyin' there with her eyes closed, but the lids tremble, and he knows that she knows what he's doin'. Once he stops as ef to speak, then his jaw is set.

"Gently he bends down and kisses her full on the lips. Her face goes whiter yet—like a sun-cloud—when he raises his head. Then he puts the revolver out before him. But his fool fingers won't close on the trigger. A sudden wave of sickness comes over him, and he puts the gun down.

"'It's—it's murder!' he whispers softly to himself.

"'It's—it's mercy!' breathes his wife.

"Once more he raises the gun, but drops it with a cry, an' leans over and buries his face in his wife's white neck. She groans softly and whispers something to him.

"'All right,' says Buck, frantically, and his cold fingers goes round the grip. The blue of th' pistol shines in the sunlight, and there comes another whisper from his wife.

"He closes his eyes. The gun trembles in his hands. Then, suddenly, it straightens out and steadies. He pulls the trigger.

"What follows ain't worth tellin'. He put the gun to his own head mor'n once—but didn't have the nerve.

"Four hours later the sheriff at that town back there has a caller. He's got arroyo mud on his boots, and a revolver with one cartridge exploded. He's a-sayin' that he's killed his wife out o' mercy, and to square the wrongs he's done her."

* * * * * * *

The smooth-shaven man of the previous story straightened up and smiled.

"I'm a lawyer," he announced, still smiling, "and I should like to have defended that case. I'd like to see any jury that would convict a man under such circumstances. With a story like that to tell he could get free after about two minutes' deliberation." He smiled complacently.

"But he didn't tell that story t' th' jury," said the little man from Texas, as he rose to leave the train with the big man. "He didn't tell that story."

The lawyer looked startled.

"For Heaven's sake, why not?" he asked.

"Because," said the little cowboy, with a cool grin, "because he thinks that if he was sentenced to death he might—might, I say—git the chance t' meet his wife ag'in. Leastwise he thinks so."

"Well, did he?" asked the lawyer.

The little man shook his head. "They gave him a life a hard labor," said he, over his shoulder, as they left the compartment.

The conductor rose to call the station.

"Who are those men?" the lawyer asked. "Do you know them?"

The conductor smiled.

"The big man," he answered, slowly, "is the sheriff of San Reo county. The man with him was—Morgan—on his way to the penitentiary for a life sentence."

(Continued on page eleven.)

The Wall Street Nemesis;

Or A WOMAN'S VENGEANCE

By George T. Hargreaves

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CHAPTER XIV.

EXTENDING HIS DEAL.

THE metropolis guessed for a whole day concerning the mysterious disappearance of that spectacular young plunger, Paul Kendall. The newspapers had not been slow in making capital out of his dramatic vanishing, in evening clothes and hatless, from the very doors of one of the most prominent restaurants in town.

Police, private detectives, and friends had joined in the search, but it had been fruitless. Half the town believed that Kendall had come another of his sensational escapades. The other half argued that he had been abducted for ransom. None guessed the real secret of his disappearance.

The public surprise was enhanced, therefore, when two mornings later the daring speculator reappeared in Wall Street, as immaculately attired, as debonair, and as secretive as of old. To no one would he give the barest hint as to the cause of his sudden disappearance and his as sudden reappearance.

"Forget it!" was his only reply to inquiries. He had made up his mind that it would be unsafe to reveal Corra Dennard as his abductress. He would have to answer too many embarrassing questions.

With fervor he plunged back into his S. L. S. deal. He was disturbed by the reports from his brokers as to what had transpired in his absence. Some one else had been buying St. Louis & Southern vigorously, and had boosted the price to 55. Just how many shares had got away from Kendall, his brokers were unable to say, but they estimated that he had missed the chance to accumulate at least 2,500.

That recalled Corra to him. Likewise it recalled to him the extremity she had reduced him to—that of carefully picking his way through dark streets from the Frothingham garage to his home, with his attire in disorder, and chains dangling at his feet; of sending out a servant to obtain the services of a locksmith, who, after some pains, removed the shackles from his ankles; and then of shedding the wreck of his evening clothes.

Just as he decided to call up Vauker, the detective, to learn how the surveillance of Corra was proceeding, that worthy was announced.

"Thought I'd have to drop chasing that woman and look after you," said the sleuth on his admittance.

Kendall smiled inscrutably, as he inquired: "Well, what of her?"

"You haven't heard?"

"Nothing."

"Well, Riker, whom I sent after her, is dead—killed."

The plunger winced perceptibly.

"How?" he asked shortly.

"Blamed if anybody knows just how. But he was probably chasing her, and ran off a bridge and was drowned. I brought his body back last night. Man, I'm getting afraid of that woman!"

"Where is she now?"

"In a hospital over at New London. She went off the bridge, too, on a car she was running, but got out of it with only a strained arm."

Vauker added an explanation of her arrest at Riker's instigation, and her subsequent complete exoneration following his death.

"She's certainly carrying a rabbit's foot for luck," he concluded.

Kendall looked up sharply.

"Vauker," he whispered, leaning toward the detective with tense face, "you have got to get that woman out of the way."

"Kendall, I'm blamed if I like the assignment. She's too clever."

"But there's good money in it," urged the plunger.

"How much?" blurted the sleuth.

"Let's see," said Kendall, as his eyes figured behind screening lids and his brow lined deeply, "how much did I agree to give you in case she failed to show up?"

"Two thousand," answered Vauker, briskly.

"Well, then, the price is ten thousand now," rasped the Wall Street man, with lips cruelly tightened.

Vauker looked into the other's face with a quizzical slant of the head.

"God!" he finally exclaimed. "That woman must be a tartar for you. That is a beastly mean trick you're putting me up to."

"Ten thousand, I say, Vauker," repeated the speculator, rising stiffly. "Do you take the job or does some one else get it?"

"Oh, I'll take it!" growled the detective shrugging his shoulders. "I can't afford to let the chance go. I need the money. But I do declare it's a rotten dirty job, just the same."

"And it's got to be finished up within one week," declared Kendall decisively.

"Oh, come now," expostulated Vauker, "that's a bit too sudden. When we made the first deal I was to have three months."

"One week, now; one week!" repeated the broker, testily. "One week! Do you understand? One week," and he pounded his desk with his fist.

"Well," grunted the detective, "I suppose I'll find a way."

Kendall had other troubles that day. His silent partners in the St. Louis & Southern deal, Hertzman, Amberg & Company, called him up to criticise his apparent neglect, and to inform him that the Street had a rumor that some powerful influence was combatting him. A half-hour later he had trouble with his new secretary, Marguerite Van Renssalaer. He gave her an order to transmit to his brokers, but she confused it, and it required some hectic language before he was able to get affairs straightened out. Marguerite went back to her desk with lips pouting and her eyes close to tears over his explosion.

Kendall watched the ticker, however, with all his old speculative nonchalance. He saw S. L. S. climb to 57 on small transactions, but he was satisfied when his brokers reported that practically all the stock bought had been for him.

"Scared the other crowd out, I guess," he murmured to himself, with a purse of the lips.

Then, as he stood over the ticker and watched the other stocks on the tape strengthen and advance slowly under the lead of S. L. S., a new idea came to him. He glanced quickly out of the window, then to the figure of his subdued but sulking secretary, then back to the flowing tape.

"Why shouldn't I?" he argued with himself in a half-tone. "It's a cinch. The rest of the market will keep going up just as long as S. L. S. does, and that has got to go a long way yet. If I buy a line of them now, I can carry them along until near the end of the deal, and then sell them out at a spanking profit. Risky? Sure, but that's the way I've always made my money. The margin? Well, ain't I backed by the Hertzmans? They needn't know about this end of my deal, but I'll just use their credit to help me carry it out. I'll clean as much again out of the whole deal as if I put through S. L. S. alone."

Marguerite heard him call up Hinchmann & Hammond, his brokers, and give some new buying orders. They included the names of a half-dozen of the most prominent issues dealt in on the Stock Exchange. She heard Kendall wrangle quite a few minutes over the question of margins with the man at the other end of the line, and then hang up the receiver in anger.

But he must have had his way, for in a few moments, during the absence of Kendall, who had gone out for some liquid refreshment, she was called on the 'phone to record the purchase for his account of 1,000 shares of Union Pacific at 176, 1,000 shares of Reading at 144¼, 500 shares of Amalgamated Copper at 67½, and 700 shares of St. Paul at 118⅛.

Quick upon the end of this call came another. She flushed as she recognized the voice.

"Say, little girl, this is the fellow who lunched with you yesterday," it said gayly.

"What, Mr. Frothingham?"

"The same tousled-headed boy. Let's lunch together again today."

"Delighted, I'm sure."

"D'you know I'm getting to quite like you, girlie."

"Oh, fie! Can't you see my blushes?"

"I wish I could; they're worth going miles to see."

"Oh, you're quite a jollier!"

"Now, don't say that. Believe me, I'm quite smitten."

"With whom?"

"You, of course; you cute little teaser."

"Hush, here comes the boss. I'll meet you at the New street corner in thirty minutes."

"I'll be waiting there in twenty," Frothingham grinned into the receiver. Then as he hung it up, he stopped short, gazed out of the window thoughtfully, and exclaimed sotto voce:

"If Cerise should hear of this she'd drop me out of her fourth-floor window, and I'd forgive her. But I've just got to jolly this girl of Kendall's along. I'm going to pump everything she knows about his business out of her. Didn't Corra tell me to do it? And you bet I've got to do something rash to make up to her for letting that brute get away from us. Say, but he worked it cute! But we'll even it up yet."

CHAPTER XV.

SECRETS BARED.

Corra Dennard, a little worn in the face, carrying her left arm a bit carefully, but with proud eyes that told of an indomitable purpose and impending success, walked briskly into her office and planted her traveling bag ceremoniously upon her desk.

"Well, if you aren't a surprise party!" ejaculated Ted, wringing her hand. "Didn't quite expect you yet. Your last letter was pretty indefinite."

"I didn't want to say much in letters, Ted," she replied, with a nod. "I was afraid the hounds on my track would get hold of them. Oh, I've been giving them a merry chase, my boy!" and she smiled triumphantly.

"Do you know, Corra, you've been away a week today?" said her assistant, soberly. "A lot of things have happened in that time."

"Of course. How about Paul? Have you got him locked up yet?"

Ted shook his head disconsolately.

"Made a bad job of that, I guess," he apologized.

"He's got away?"

"On the second night," admitted Ted sadly.

"I thought things on the Exchange were stirring lively enough to indicate that he was at work there again," said Corra, evenly. "How's S. L. S. today? I saw by the papers that it got up to 60 yesterday."

"Opened at 61 this morning," replied the young man, consulting the clicking ticker. "Went up to 62 right away. Here it is again. One hundred shares at 63."

"He's certainly got things boiling, hasn't he? How's the rest of the market?"

"Boiling too," grinned Ted. "For four days now the market has been moving up with S. L. S."

"Yes, I noticed that," Corra returned, significantly. "But how did he get away from you?"

Frothingham explained lamely the circumstances as he conjectured them. The relief watcher had disappeared completely, but the broken door, the mislaid files, the brandy bottle's wreck, the signs of a desperate struggle, enabled him to construct a theory of Kendall's escape that was not far from the real facts.

"But I've partly made up for letting him get away," he declared proudly.

"So? How?" asked Corra, as she busied herself removing packages of tightly-bound stock certificates from her bag and stacking them carefully and lovingly within the secret confines of her desk.

"Why, I know just how his deal is getting on."

"You don't say? Tell us," and she smiled at the boy encouragingly.

"Well, you see, it was like this: I found out from a clerk in his office whom he had put in your place. She's a pink-and-white thing. Calls herself Marguerite Van Renssalaer. Enough of a name to break her back, isn't it? Well, he pointed her out to me, and three days ago I waited till she went to lunch. Then I followed her into Jimmy's place, in Nassau street, and took a seat at the next table. Kind of mean to run a girl down like that, eh? But I sure had to do something desperate to even up for letting Kendall escape."

"And then?" inquired Corra, quietly, keeping her eyes away from the embarrassed young man.

"Then," responded Ted, with a grin, "she saw me eyeing her, and a minute later she dropped her napkin, so that I could see it. Now, I'm not saying that she dropped it on purpose, but, say, I wouldn't need two guesses to hit it. Anyway, I picked it up and returned it to her. And I didn't stop there. I just had to keep on talking with her. You know I'm inclined to be gabby, anyway. So we got quite chummy in about fifteen minutes. The next day we ate together, and I learned a lot about Kendall's business. He's crazy mad because he can't buy more S. L. S. She says he keeps telephoning to his brokers, Hinchmann & Hammond, raising Cain with them because they don't get hold of more of it. She says he's got to have 20,000 shares, and he's only got about 15,000, and the price has got up where he didn't expect it to get so soon. She says he rants and tears around like a crazy man at times."

"Paul is drinking again," said Corra, soberly. "When he is normal, he is the quietest, calmest, clearest-headed man I ever knew. But too much drink transforms him."

She stood a moment looking abstractedly out of the window toward the building across the street in which Kendall's offices were located. Then she shook herself gently, and turned again to Frothingham.

"Yes, Ted, and what else did you learn?" she inquired.

"Oh, yes, there is something else!" her assistant ejaculated, excitedly. "I'd almost forgotten it: Yesterday Marguerite told me Kendall had been buying a lot of other stocks, too. Speculating like the real plunger he is. His brokers keep calling him up for more margins, but he keeps putting them off. She thinks he's hard up, because the office force didn't get their envelopes this week. He just told them he'd pay every two weeks after this. So they've all got a grouch."

Corra came across the room and patted Frothingham on the shoulder.

"Good boy, Ted!" she exclaimed. "You've done better than I expected you to. But, tell me, has Kendall made any move that looked like he was hunting us down for our kidnaping?"

"Not a peep of any kind, Corra."

"And, Ted," she went on, slowly, with head bent, "how about this little 'pink-and-white' thing — this Marguerite — what's her name? Is there any chance that she will make any difference between you and—Cerise?"

The young man laughed heartily and boyishly.

"Honest, now, Corra, you're joking, aren't you? Don't you suppose I know the difference between a real diamond and a rhinestone imitation?"

"Well, you've seen enough of the real diamonds to know the difference," smiled the woman. "But you know, some of us wear an awfully high polish outside, but a pretty low quality of value inside."

"Corra," declared Ted, with a ring in his voice and a flash in his eye that brought to the young woman's heart a touch of pride in him, "I'm giving up my chances for a half-million dollars because I love your sister enough to want her more than all the money in the world. As for this Marguerite, why, she's an awful 'shine.' I'm only doing this stunt to help you out—and to get even with Kendall. Aren't you satisfied?"

"Yes, yes, my boy," Corra replied quietly, as she patted his shoulder softly. "But I do think a heap of Cerise, and I wouldn't have her heart broken for anything. You know one experience of that kind in a home is enough," and she turned away sadly.

"Say, I didn't mean to be sore," Ted apologized. "And as for hurting your feelings, why, I'd a good deal rather take it out on Kendall. But let's get happier. How'd you get along while away?"

Corra looked up with a satisfied smile, and then shook a package of carefully-tied stock certificates at him.

"I surprised myself," she responded briskly. "It was so easy to get these, I almost had to laugh."

"What are they?" breezed the young man.

"Stock certificates of the St. Louis & Southern Railroad," she answered, with a hint of pride.

"Just had to sell 'em to you, eh?"

"Oh, it took some dickering"—Corra shook her head seriously—"because it was so unusual, you see, to have any one come around, particularly a woman, and try to buy their stock. But the most of them, tired of waiting for dividends, gladly sold their holdings when I offered a dollar or so a share above the prevailing market price."

"Say, Corra, I believe you could have talked them into buying gold bricks if you'd tried. You're mighty smooth with the tongue."

"Hush, boy! You'll make me blush."

"But did you get enough stock to win your fight with Kendall?"

"Almost, I'm thinking. How much has Marcosson picked up?"

Ted excitedly consulted the records he had been keeping in the absence of his employer.

"Just 4,200 shares for your account, according to reports up to last night," he announced.

"Good," Corra smiled, as she picked up a pencil to do some rapid figuring. "Those, with the 11,750 shares I've brought back, make 15,950. That's only 1,050 shares shy of the 17,000 I need to complete my deal with Dorgan!"

"But how are you going to get the rest?"

"Easy, Ted, easy; some of those New Englanders wouldn't sell to me, even though I paid them cash, until they'd looked me up further. When they find I'm all right, they'll be sending their stock down here. Miss Hathaway, a dried-up old maid, over at Stonington, promised to send me her 800 shares. And, besides, I guess I can afford to buy a little on the Exchange, in spite of the price Kendall has boosted it to. The average price I've paid so far it below 56."

"And this morning it's up to 63," congratulated the young man, striding toward the busy ticker. "Yes, by thunder, it's up to 66 now. See," and he tore off a piece of the tape to carry to Corra for her inspection.

"That makes a rise of $16 a share in a week in a stock that nobody thought was worth the gilt on the certificates," exclaimed the woman. "Pretty brisk rise that."

"And the rest of the market is climbing, too," announced Ted, returning to the ticker. "Here's Reading up two points in four transactions."

"Good; this thing is getting into my

blood," laughed Corra, with a faint flush in her tired cheeks. "Do you know, I really feel that when it comes to buying the last lots to wind up my deal, I'd like to give the market something to talk about by boosting the price like a skyrocket."

"Yes, and I want to be where I can see Paul Kendall's face when you're doing it," declared Ted.

Little did he imagine at that moment that his wish was to come tragically true.

"But, say," he went on in a hurry, glancing at his watch, "I'm two minutes over the time for my date with Van Renssalaer. Good-by," and, grabbing up his hat, he was off.

Corra stood musing for a moment. Then she stepped to a window to watch Ted emerge into the street and hurry through the noonday throng and across the roadway to the entrance of the building in which Kendall's office was located. Her woman's curiosity craved for a peek at the girl who had supplanted her in the plunger's office.

As she stood waiting she lifted her eyes to the windows of Kendall's office situated diagonally across and a story below her own. From where she gazed she could look fairly into his private apartment.

Suddenly she grew rigid as she beheld Kendall himself step somberly toward a window and look out. As if impelled by some mysterious power, his eyes raised until they took in the figure of Corra. She saw his start as he beheld her. She felt a wave of compassion sweep through her frame as she noted his drawn, white face, his wrinkled and worried brow. She steadied herself to withhold the faint smile of sympathy that sought to overspread her face.

But there was no responsive feeling in the countenance of the man below. Instead, a bitter sneer curled on his handsome mouth, and into his eyes crept an expression that was half malignant, hate, half desperate defiance. It said as plainly as though his words reached her across the crowded city chasm: "This fight is to the death, woman; to the death."

Unspeakably wretched, with her woman's heart still palpitating fondly for the man she had loved and who had spurned her, she staggered, rather than dropped, into the chair at her dask, and burying her face in her extended arms gave way to a fit of prolonged sobbing.

Her revenge in that hour seemed so poor and pitiable. She craved anew the love that had once been hers. She wanted to forgive the awful affront that Paul Kendall had put upon her. She pitied his extremity. A kind glance from him a moment ago would have undermined her plan for revenge, might even have destroyed it.

But she stiffened anew as she remembered the scorn, the hate in his look. The remembrance of that momentary expression on his face sealed anew her purpose to defeat him in the struggle of his life. Thus quickly, thus easily are the currents of our lives shifted.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PLUNGER'S PLOTS.

Up and down the reaches of New England, Detective Vauker, as the secret agent of Paul Kendall, had looked for Corra Dennard. He quickly picked up her trail in the hospital at New London, where she had had her strained arm treated, following the automobile disaster in which his assistant, Tom Riker, had lost his life. He found the men she had dealt with for St. Louis & Southern stock in that vicinity, but beyond there he could not trace her. He followed a dozen different clews, he studied hotel registers, he watched at railroad stations, he consulted garages. But the trail was absolutely blind.

He called up Kendall on the long distance telephone several times, to learn whether or not he had seen or heard anything of Miss Dennard, but got no light in his search. He hustled from New Haven to Boston, and from Boston to New Haven, on the vaguest tip from a railroad station master, but it was like tracking a footprintless fairy through a virgin forest.

At the end of three days he was ready to give up the chase in despair, but the liberal fee that Kendall had promised kept him to his task. But two days more of fruitless jaunting—during which Corra twice crossed his path in a Boston hotel, but managed to evade his surveillance through the medium of an assumed name on the register—served to drive him back to New York in anger and disgust. On his arrival in the evening, he learned from his employer that Corra had reached the city in the morning. He was, moreover, abjured with an imprecation to "get busy or she'll have my whole cake kicked over."

"Tomorrow," replied Vauker, with a scowl, "we'll finish this thing up completely and satisfactorily."

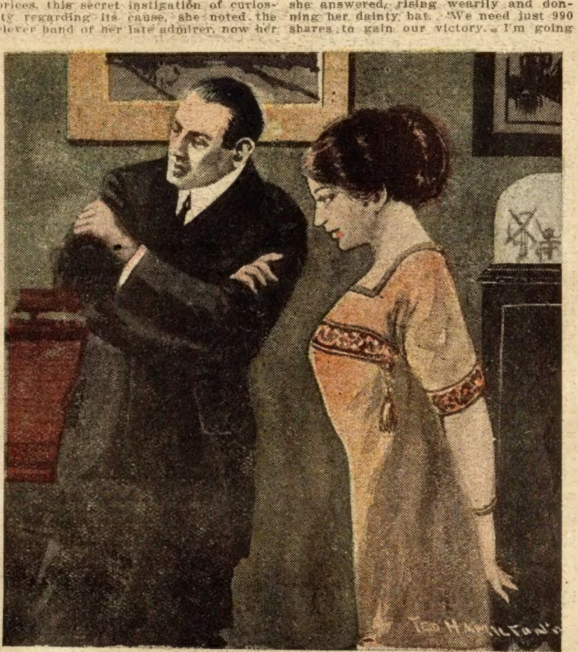
"Tomorrow" the finish of more things than Vauker's was planned. Corra was at her office desk before eight o'clock. Ted Frothingham came in a few moments later. The two at once delved into the problem of sorting and calculating the number of S. L. S. shares she now held. The aggregate was 16,010, or 990 short of the requisite number to close her deal with Dorgen & Company, in order to pocket a quarter-million in profits, and—she thought of it with a staboing pain in her heart—to send Paul Kendall down to unutterable financial ruin.

Other possibilities, too, confronted her. Her quick intuition had told her of an uneasy, strained feeling in the Street. The market was excited. Prices bobbed about in a nervous manner, but generally upward. No one seemed to know just what the provocation was for the rise. But the buying was so insistent that investors, speculators and plungers were loading up with stocks. Yet every last one of them was furtively watching the tape for a sign that would indicate that the advance was over, and that it was time to take profits.

The newspapers printed stories of the unusual and unexplained rise. They made it an even greater mystery through their lack of real facts. Yet one of them was close enough to the truth to intimate that two powerful speculative parties were at work in the market, and that some astonishing advances were being planned.

That brought a crowd of so-called outsiders—men who take a flyer in the market only occasionally—to help along the "bull" fever. In a week, from the insignificant start which Kendall's initial purchases had given prices, Wall Street was in the throes of a "bull" fever. Everybody was buying—from millionaires to office boys.

Corra readily understood the real impetus. In this spasmodic lifting of prices, this secret instigation of curiosity regarding its cause, she noted the clever hand of her late admirer, now her bitter rival. It was always his policy to buy many different securities when there appeared insistent buying in a particular one. Kendall was never satisfied with the possible profits out of a single deal. He always wanted to "take a chance" to increase his winnings.



"He's certainly got things boiling!"

Through Marcosson, her broker, she obtained a good idea of just how false the character of the rise was. It was purely a mushroom affair that a strong and vigorous "bear"—a speculator who believes in lower prices and sells heavily to bring them about—could have wrecked in a day's operations. But no one had the nerve to attempt that. An insidious feeling prevailed that the rise was indicated by some powerful clique, and that the man who opposed it would be likely to lose his roll.

But Corra's unerring intuition, aided by the information Ted Frothingham had extracted from Kendall's talkative secretary, revealed to her the real condition of the market as plainly as though a diagram of its purchases and sales, with names of buyers and sellers attached, were spread out before her. She saw Kendall's clever hand in it. She saw how he had amassed not only all the S. L. S. that his brokers could buy, but a heavy line of other stocks.

In other words, he was manipulating an inverted pyramid. Starting with purchases of single thousands of shares of various stocks, he had increased his orders as they advanced, until now he was accumulating tens of thousands. So long as the market kept on steadily rising, he was safe. But let it once begin to to drag, to droop, and to decline, and his cautiously erected pyramid would be tumbled into ruins. Yet she was sure that Kendall would not sell out his other holdings until he was close to success in his S. L. S. deal. He expected the announcement of that to give the market a final excited bulge. On that boom be planned to dispose of his pyramid.

With her chin in her hand and her eyes set dreamily upon the array of figures before her, she studied out the close of the campaign by which she aimed, not only to checkmate, but to ruin him.

On the previous day Ted had brought her word, after his lunch chat with Kendall's secretary—that "pink-and-white thing" Marguerite Van Renssalaer—that the plunger was carrying 100,000 shares of stock outside of his accumulations of St. Louis & Southern, and that his credit was strained to the limit. As to the amount of S. L. S. he now held, she was in doubt, but she could not believe that he was as near to controlling a majority of the stock as she was. Yet the possibility that he had enough to defeat her campaign made her nervous.

"We might as well have it over at once," she said to Frothingham, as he eyed her from a corner of the office, meantime trying to alleviate the torrid heat of the August day with a huge palm-leaf fan. "I'm getting tired and—and—disgusted with this game."

"But how are you going to have it over with?"

"Ted, we'll probably set the market to boiling, but I'm going to try it," she answered, rising wearily and donning her dainty hat. "We need just 990 shares to gain our victory. I'm going over to see Marcosson now—I can't trust the order to the telephone—and instruct him to buy me a thousand shares of S. L. S. today—and I'm not intending to put any limit on the price I'll pay."

"Gee," exclaimed Ted, with popping eyes, "you'll turn hell lose over there," nodding in the direction of the Stock Exchange across the street.

"Tut-tut," Corra reprimanded, with a finger to her lips, "that language may fit the situation exactly, but it doesn't sound nice."

"I wish the ticker was over there by the window," fussed the young man.

"Why?" she asked, moving toward the door.

"So I could watch the market jump, and look down into the window of Kendall's office and see him jump at the same time."

"So you've discovered that we can look down there from our windows, eh?"

"Oh, sure! Marguerite and I found that out several days ago," he responded, with a sheepish grin.

"Well, don't watch their windows so much that you overlook things here," she admonished.

"Not when the signs of the times point to a panic on the tape," Ted declared.

"And hold things down until I get back," Corra instructed, as she left the office.

"I'll sit as tight as old John D. Rockefeller himself," was his farewell shot.

Miss Dennard made a striking figure as she left the elevator and wended her way to the office of her broker, Marcosson. There was a grave dignity about her carriage, a steely intentness about her face, a subdued dash about her dainty summer gown, that all together made men—despite the insufferably hot day—turn their heads and watch her steady step through the jostling throng.

One, indeed, had watched her since she entered the elevator near her office door. Standing in the corridor, in the attitude of a stranger looking for a firm name that he could not find, Detective Vauker had been scrutinizing the outside of the Dennard office ever since she had entered it earlier in the morning. And when he saw her disappear in the lift, he hastened to intrude upon the presence of young Frothingham.

"Miss Dennard not in?" he inquired, as if disappointed.

"Not in," returned Ted, sententiously

"Sorry," said the detective, with pursed lips.

His keen eyes took in every detail of the office at one sweeping glance. He noted the desks, the ticker, the table, the chairs, the telephone. But not till he noted the drinking-water tank, standing close beside the door, did his expression of disappointment change. He smiled dismally then, as if to convey the impression that another time he might be fortunate enough to find the woman for whom he had asked.

"Anything I can do for you?" asked Ted, with eyes bent rather upon the Kendall office windows across the street than upon the visitor.

"Um!" mumbled the sleuth, as if in a study. "Do you expect her back soon?"

"Couldn't say," replied the young man, over his shoulder, for he was intently watching the "pink-and-white thing" waving to him from one of the Kendall windows. She was undoubtedly calling him—and urgently at that.

"I guess I'll wait a bit, then," announced Vauker, and he removed his wide-brimmed straw hat and sank into a chair.

"But I'm going out," said Ted as, with a wave of his hand to the girl across the way, he jammed down his hat upon his head and hurried to the door.

"All right," calmly declared the visitor, "I'll keep house till you get back."

"Oh, very well," blurted Ted, as he strode to the desks, closed them with a bang, and was particular to note that they were locked. "Keep house, then. I won't be gone but a minute or two," and he popped out of the door and was away.

Vauker sprang into action at once. Giving one swift glance about the office to see that it held no one in concealment, he stepped softly to the water cooler. Removing the adjustable top, he looked within. The receptacle was about half full of water. He smiled sinisterly.

"She'll have to drink on a hot day like this," he mutered, and deftly he whipped from a waistcoat pocket a neatly bound pharmacist's package. With his teeth he loosened the string. With his fingers he undid the small parcel, revealing a mound of white powder. He lifted it carefully, and let all of it slide into the water. Then he returned paper and string to his pocket.

He glanced again into the receptacle to watch the powder, slowly, dissolve. Then he put back the top of the cooler. Again he glanced furtively about the room to assure himself that he had not been watched.

"Cyanide of potassium," he murmured between set teeth. "That'll do the trick, if she isn't poison-proof—and I guess she isn't. I've never heard of any one who got over a dose of it yet."

Then, setting his hat jauntily upon one side of his head, he went out, closing the door softly behind him. And he walked down the long stairway instead of descending in the elevator.

This capital story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00 and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Her Secret.

One day a pastor was calling upon a dear old lady, one of the "pillars" of the church to which they both belonged. As he thought of her long and useful life, and looked upon her sweet, placid countenance bearing but few tokens of her ninety-two years of earthly pilgrimage, he was moved to ask her, "My dear Mrs. S., what has been the chief source of your strength and sustenance during all these years? What has appealed to you as the real basis of your unusual vigor of mind and body, and has been to you an unfailing comfort through joy and sorrow? Tell me, that I may pass the secret on to others, and, if, possible, profit by it myself."

The old lady thought a moment, then lifting her eyes, dim with age, yet kindling with sweet memories of the past, answered briefly: "Victuals."

* * *

WHY HAVE ASTHMA OR CATARRH?

A prominent European physician has recently discovered that neither Asthma nor Catarrh are incurable. Not only are these diseases not incurable, but they can be completely eradicated from the human system. Full information and sample can be had absolutely free by addressing Williams Medicine Company, 106 Fulton St., New York.

FROM THE NORTH COUNTRY

Where the Winters are Cold and the Snows Deep.

Writing from the vicinity David Harum made famous, a man says that he was an habitual coffee drinker, and, although he knew it was doing him harm, was too obstinate to give it up, till all at once he went to pieces with nervousness and insomnia, loss of appetite, weakness, and a generally used-up feeling, which practically unfitted him for his arduous occupation, and kept him on a couch at home when his duty did not call him out.

"While in this condition Grape-Nuts food was suggested to me and I began to use it. Although it was in the middle of winter and the thermometer was often below zero, almost my entire living for about six weeks of severe exposure was on Grape-Nuts food with a little bread and butter and a cup of hot water, till I was wise enough to make Postum my table beverage.

"After the first two weeks I began to feel better and during the whole winter I never lost a trip on my mail route, frequently being on the road 7 or 8 hours at a time.

"The constant marvel to me was how a person could do the amount of work and endure the fatigue and hardship as I did, on so small an amount of food. But I found my new rations so perfectly satisfactory that I have continued them—using both Postum and Grape-Nuts at every meal, and often they comprise my entire meal.

"All my nervousness, irritability and insomnia have disappeared and healthy, natural sleep has come back to me. But what has been, perhaps, the greatest surprise to me is the fact that with the benefit to my general health has come a remarkable improvement in my eye-sight.

"If a good appetite, good digestion, good eye-sight, strong nerves and an active brain are to be desired, I can say from my own experience, use Grape-Nuts and Postum." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

* * *

A Wise Girl.

The baseball player gazed softly at her.

"Would you sign with me for the game of life?" he whispered tenderly.

"That will depend somewhat on your batting average and your capacity for making home runs," she replied.

* * *

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* * *

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Before again you try,
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And grin and tell you why.

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D. J. Lane, a chemist at 115 Lane Building, St. Marys, Kansas, manufactures a remedy for Asthma in which he has so much confidence that he sends a $1 bottle by express to anyone who will write for it. His offer is that he is to be paid for it if it cures, and the one taking the treatment is to be the judge.

* * *

Ready to Trade.

"There are some things money cannot buy."

"I know, but I'm willing to swap them for the things it can buy."

* * *

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Benham—Well, I'm a reformed drunkard.

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The Vanished Bride;

Or, THE MYSTIC PROFILE

By Edyth Kirkwood

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Begun in No. 5, February 3. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Ah! I am very weary of this sorrow!
Where are you? Oh, my best beloved friend!
And must I ask tomorrow and tomorrow—
And what shall be the end?"

ROMAINE, for a while after her father's return, seemed perfectly happy. The gloomy old mansion was enlivened by wood fires, for the evenings were growing chilly as the autumn closed and the girl flitted cheerfully about with a song upon her lips.

But as time passed on, Dr. Bolton, who was a frequent visitor, observed that she grew depressed and was in some way, indefinable yet tangible, changed. She was very pretty and less childish than formerly, but there was something besides—an anxious, alert expression in the eyes that used to be so soft and sweet; a watchfulness in her manner, as though she were constantly on a strain of expectation.

The doctor felt puzzled, and determined to seek an early opportunity of questioning her.

"She may be tormenting herself with some notion about her father," he thought, "something that I can set right by a few judicious words."

But this theory collapsed, when on several occasions he met Romaine returning by the sea road from the island port, as though she had been on the water. She was always accompanied by the huge dog, Wolf, but the anxious, careworn expression on her face did not seem to indicate that she had been out for amusement.

Twice she refused his offer to drive her home, but the third time fate was too strong for her.

It was a wild November evening, the trees were writhing and bending as the storm wind stripped them of their leaves, which whirled and rattled before the gale. Over the sea the white-capped waves rose higher and higher, and broke upon the shore with a noise like thunder. A thin veil of scurrying cloud drifted rapidly across the heavens where, high and wan, floated a watery moon.

Romaine was battling with the elements. Her skirts were heavy with the ocean spray; her hat was blown all out of shape; her hair was in wildest disorder.

The doctor stopped his horse and spoke rather sternly.

"What does this mean, Romaine? You must know that it is highly improper for you to be wandering about alone at this hour. What can your father be thinking of to allow it!"

Romaine did not reply. She raised her white face, with her bright eyes shining, as Dr. Bolton thought, like two stars; but she stood silent.

"Get in," said the doctor, shortly.

She hesitated.

"I am in a hurry, Romaine."

She took her place beside him and gave a sigh of relief.

"You may as well tell me what is bringing you here, Romaine; for everything comes to my ears sooner or later."

"I have nothing to tell."

"You must have some purpose. Is it—is it to visit your mother?"

She caught her breath with a quick sob.

"Yes."

"Is she sick?"

Dr. Bolton turned the carriage about.

"Now, then, where shall I drive?"

"You cannot reach her tonight. I was almost wrecked in getting to shore. She is on that far-off island where there is a house with one tree beside it."

"And how do you reach this island?" asked the doctor, suppressing his astonishment and dismay.

"There is a messenger who comes in a boat and brings me back again."

"Has Delphine—your mother—proper comforts and medical attendance?"

"The house is comfortably furnished," said Romaine, hesitating, "but she is past help, I fear. Something is wrong about her heart."

"She may be past recovery, my child," said the doctor, gravely, "but not past relief. Medical skill may give her ease instead of a lingering agony. I must see her. Is she feeble?"

"No. She seems strong enough, but she has sinking turns, and at times attacks of acute suffering."

"Is there no way of getting over tonight?"

"None. It has something to do with the tide—I am sure we could not reach her."

"Does she want to stay where she is?"

"She says she won't move unless she can go to Christine Emery."

"Christine Emery!" exclaimed the doctor, angrily. "Is she out of her mind?"

"I don't know what to make of her," said the girl, wearily. "I went because she sent for me. She seems to love me dearly—but—there has been so much mystery—there are so many things which have never been explained to me, and we have been so persecuted, so tormented, for years by that hideous profile and other occult manifestations, that I am, naturally, unresponsive. And I fear I disappoint her."

The doctor nodded without speaking.

"Then, think," continued Romaine, "of Mrs. Emery being shut up in that sanitarium! How can I—how can I give my heart when lifelong habit has taught me nothing but fear and dread?"

"I know," he replied. "But, Romaine, your mother is probably nearing her end. She has, as you may have heard it hinted, led a varied and not a good life. Her talents have been wasted over this occultism, and her beauty was to her a snare. Still, my child, she is your mother and she does love you."

Romaine sighed.

"Why does she want to go to Miss Christine?"

"I cannot imagine."

"It is a curious whim. What would Miss Christine say to it?"

"If she thought she could do any good, or that there was any duty involved, she would not hesitate to receive her."

"Just my own opinion," muttered the doctor.

"I will see her about it," he added, presently.

"Oh! how kind you are," exclaimed the girl, bursting into tears. "I should never have taken courage to ask her; but I would like to have my poor mother under the influence of such a good woman as Christine."

"Well, we will see what can be done, but it is a dreadful piece of business."

After depositing Romaine at her own door, Dr. Bolton drove rapidly to the Emery mansion and asked to see Mr. Emery.

When they were in the library and the door was closed, he said:

"I have come on an important but most unpleasant affair."

"Your face told me as much before you spoke," said his friend. "I hope there is nothing wrong over at Wolverton's."

"It is about Delphine Wolverton, or Mrs. Brown, as she should be called."

"Then it is sure to be disagreeable," said Mr. Emery, dryly.

The doctor ran briefly over his evening's experience.

Alan Emery heard him in silence, and frowned without replying.

"What do you say to this singular idea?" asked the doctor.

"I have nothing at all to say. It seems to me simply preposterous."

"The woman is probably dying."

"Even so."

"I spoke to you first, because this house is yours, and it rests with you to say whether or not Delphine could be received, supposing Miss Christine were willing."

"Christine shall decide it," replied Alan, pressing a bell as he spoke. "Ask Miss Emery to come here," he said, as the domestic appeared.

Christine, dressed in white, fresh, golden haired, and gentle eyed, was soon with them. A faint color rose to her cheeks as she greeted Dr. Bolton; for his earnest gaze betrayed his admiration.

When the circumstances were stated, Christine for a moment felt deeply offended. She rose with a look of indignation and a gesture of haughty refusal.

"Just as I supposed," said her brother.

"Well, I cannot blame you," said the doctor, picking up his hat. "There was merely one chance in a thousand that you might consent to receive Delphine—for Romaine's sake."

"Oh!" said Christine, falteringly, "for Romaine's sake—I had forgotten she was Romaine's mother. Well, then, tell Romaine that for love of her I will receive her mother."

"God bless you for a saint!" exclaimed Dr. Bolton, devoutly.

"It is terribly hard to do," she said, faintly.

"Too hard, I fear," said her brother, as the door closed on Dr. Bolton. "Are you not inviting a fiasco? The situation will be simply impossible. It is not too late to withdraw. Let me send word to that effect."

"No. I shall be equal to it. If Romaine's mother wants to see me I cannot refuse her dying request. I hope," she added, timidly, "that Caryl will not mind."

"I can answer for it that she will not. She is of a forgiving nature."

Even her own brother never knew the fierceness of the struggle in Christine's gentle heart. Delphine had disgraced the man she, Christine, loved; had wrecked his life with her follies, shattered his health with her persecutions, and had marred the social prospects of the daughter she professed to adore.

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These things were hard to forgive, without counting the hideous cruelty of her conduct toward Caryl.

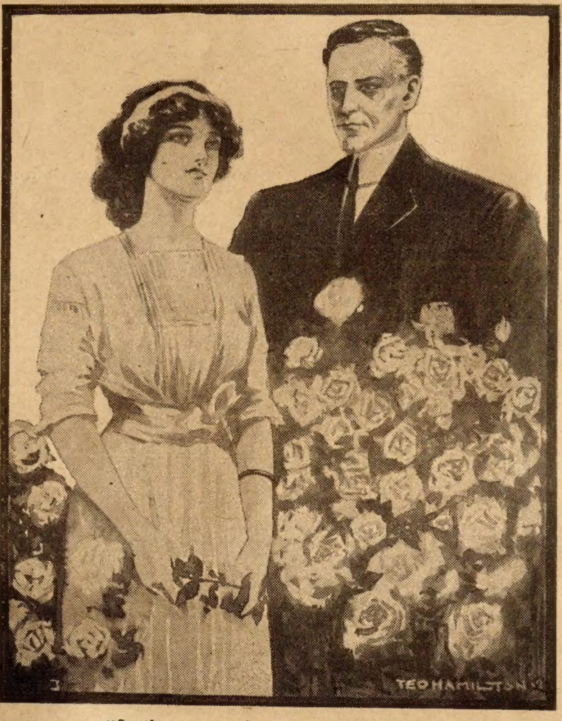
Then, too, and not least, was the feeling of offended delicacy. Christine, so virtuous, so pure, so scrupulous in her nicety, shrank from the mere idea of receiving a woman of tarnished reputation.

But with her quick sympathy and intuition she guessed that Delphine wished to bespeak her kindness for Romaine, or had some message to leave, and she could not refuse this consolation through any desire to spare her own feelings.

There was another thought that troubled her. What would they think over at Wolverton's?

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Have you missed in your aim? Well,
the mark is still shining.
Did you faint in the race? Well, take
breath for the next.
Did the clouds drive you back? But see
yonder their lining.
Were you tempted and fell? Let it
serve for a text."



"So there are only you and I, little girl!"

Dr. Bolton acted promptly. He feared that there might be little enough time to spare.

How to reach the island he did not know, so the next morning he called for Romaine and asked for directions.

He found her walking through the garden with her father. They were examining some late flowers that were grouped about a white marble statue. Cold chrysanthemums, pale and dry-looking, albeit of fine growth, and emitting their strangely pungent, yet agreeable odor.

"Some few varieties we have here," said Mr. Wolverton, after the first greetings. "Romaine and I are of one mind regarding the monstrous specimens exhibited at the flower shows. We prefer a smaller, more perfectly formed flower of daisy form, and are especially fond of those that grow in clusters."

"I, too," began Dr. Bolton, then stopped aghast, for across the white pedestal slowly flitted a dark shadow, and its form was that of the familiar and hideous profile.

"Delphine must be getting better," thought the doctor; "she is at her old tricks."

Mr. Wolverton shuddered as he perceived the shadow, and covered his eyes.

But Romaine examined it curiously and looked about her quickly, as though seeking to detect the means by which this strange effect was produced. She sought in vain. There was nothing anywhere in the vicinity that could have given rise to such a reflection, and no perceptible apparatus.

"It is destined to remain a mystery," she murmured.

Dr. Bolton watched her with increasing interest. All absorbed by her search, she was unconscious of his gaze, and made a charming picture. Her shapely head was thrown back as she explored the treetops and the skies, the full young throat, the lovely tints of her healthy, rosy face were a joy to see, and the doctor, wearied with the sickly countenances of his numerous patients, appreciated Romaine's glowing health and delighted in it. She was dressed in a soft fabric of a peculiar shade of pink. Mr. Wolverton was very fastidious in matters of dress, and always advised her as to colors. She looked, so Dr. Bolton thought, like the incarnation of dawn.

Becoming at last aware of his fixed regard, she blushed and turned away.

"It is no use to hunt about for the cause of this phenomenon," said the doctor, gravely; "but I think this is probably its last manifestation."

Mr. Wolverton looked up quickly, and gave an inquiring glance, to which the doctor responded by solemnly inclining his head.

There was silence for the space of a few minutes, each one thinking of that blighted life, that beauty and talent so perverted, misused and destroyed.

Mr. Wolverton's mind reverted to his early days, when, glamoured by Delphine's beauty, he had deemed her perfection, had believed her character to be as fair as her face. The years of disenchantment had been long and weary; she had disgraced his name and desolated his hearth, yet, such is the strangeness of of the human heart, he heard of her approaching death with a sharp pang, as though she had been to him a faithful wife. He turned away without speaking, and walked with bent head toward the house.

As for Romaine, she felt a sentimental, girlish grief. Her feeling for her mother was more of puzzled fear than of affection. She had never known material care, and the mystery concerning her mother's absence had never been explained to her. She was old enough now to make a shrewd guess. Her attachment to her father filled her heart with indignation against one who could desert and disgrace him, yet duty—so she thought—compelled her to try to soothe the last days of this woman who had wronged them both so deeply.

Dr. Bolton, for his part, felt very sorry, but a professional impatience to set about relieving the patient's condition was his paramount feeling at the present moment. He was eager to get Delphine away from her lonely island and into Miss Christine's care. So he did not give Romaine much time to grieve.

"If you can, come at once," he said, kindly. "Every moment is of importance, and it will save a great deal of time if you will show me the way."

The girl turned obediently, and gathering up her hat and cape, which lay on a rustic bench, declared herself ready.

They drove away in silence. The doctor, respecting her mood, made no effort at conversation, yet for the first time he noticed something peculiar in Romaine's manner, a coldness and reserve which made her seem older and more staid.

She had always been so gay, so kittenish, with him, so clinging and child-

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MRS. H. J. PRICE.
1334 Center St., Portsmouth, Ohio,

Personally appeared before me this 13th day of September, 1909, Mrs. H. J. Price, who subscribed the above statement and made oath that the same is true in substance and in fact.

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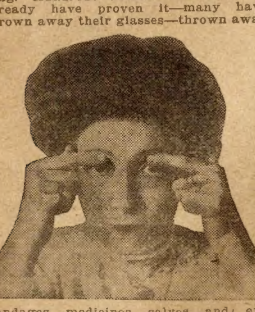

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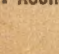

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like, that this new manner struck him with surprise; but in another moment he told himself that it was but natural for the painful circumstances to develop thus suddenly all the womanly qualities lying hitherto dormant.

When they reached the shore, Romaine directed him to a hut built against an overhanging cliff. A fishing boat was rocking on the water in front. The owner was summoned, they entered, and were soon afloat.

The wind was against them, so that it took nearly three quarters of an hour to reach their destination. As they passed by the ruined lighthouse, they examined it curiously, but through the hollow loopholes and crumbing walls there came no answer to ther questioning gaze. Yet Dr. Bolton had a curious impression.

"Tell me, Romaine," he said, bending toward her and speaking in a low tone, "did you notice something like bands of pale blue flame as we went by?"

Romaine nodded.

"Have you observed this before?"

"Yes—infrequently. It always portends calamity. But we are nearing our landing place. The current here is smooth."

The doctor began to wonder how Delphine would take his coming thus uninvited into her retreat.

But he need not have been anxious. The old witch-woman of the cave, who now acted as attendant, did not count for much as a companion, and solitude was beginning to tell on the invalid's nerves.

She was seated, half reclining, in a steamer chair, well propped up with silk cushions. She wore a flowing wrapper of purple velvet, with a crepe shawl of a pale shade of violet, which was thrown over her head and fell in exquisite folds of finest texture about her still commanding form.

She gave an exclamation of delight as they appeared, and made an effort to rise, but at a gesture from the physician fell back on the cushions with a quick catch in her breath and a convulsion of pain on her beautiful features.

Romaine made a movement of alarm, but the doctor quietly unbuckled his medicine case and administered a sedative, which relieved the paroxysm, and enabled the patient to board the boat.

Little was said as they sailed smoothly to land. This time the wind was favorable, and the white sail puffed out and bore them steadily and swiftly to shore.

The drive from the beach to the Emery mansion was made in silence, but Romaine observed that the physician urged his horse to a speed that amazed that easy-going quadruped, and that he cast more than one anxious look on Delphine—who, catching his troubled eye, shrugged her shoulders and smiled.

Christine Emery and Miss Lynn were walking through one of the embowered garden paths as the vehicle drove up. Miss Lynn retired discreetly, and Christine came forward with a kindly greeting. This guest was unwelcome and likely to prove troublesome; but she was ill, dying—a glance showed that—and Christine's tone was one of sweetest sympathy.

Mrs. Wolverton responded with sufficient courtesy, but without evincing any surprise or gratitude over her gracious reception by one who had every cause to consider her an enemy. In vain Dr. Bolton and Romaine searched her face for some token of appreciation. Delphine was, as ever, too wholly engrossed in herself to give a thought to other people's sacrifices.

Christine led the way to the apartments specially prepared, and the doctor observed her delicate care in all the arrangements—the blazing open fire diffusing cheerfulness and warmth, the flowering plants sweetening the air, the easy chair and lounge with the wealth of cushions.

He made the patient comfortable, promised to call again inside of an hour, and beckoning to Romaine, they slipped quietly away.

"Shall I leave you?" asked Christine, observing that her guest had closed her eyes wearily.

"No; I have little time to spare. Please sit down there where I can see your face."

The contrast between the two women was curious. One, like a gorgeous orchid in her double shades of purple, mysterious, perchance baneful. The other, sweet and fair as a white rose, pure and wholesome in her goodness.

Christine did as she was requested and waited.

"Have you no questions to ask me?" said Delphine. "There is something you wish to know. Remember, I am something of a witch," she laughed, "and I am sure you desire to question me."

"You are right," replied Miss Emery, with gentle dignity. "I wished to ask whether Mr. Brown is still living, and if so, whether you would like him to be notified of your illness and change of address."

"He is dead," said Delphine, calmly. "Killed himself in a jealous frenzy."

Christine drew back with a shudder. "And did you not—" she stammered—"did you not——"

"Did I not—what?' Care? Oh! in a way, yes. But as you look at it, I was perhaps indifferent. Such attachments, founded on folly and wrong-doing, seldom endure. That his love outlasted mine was—well, his misfortune more than my fault. I went my own way; he refused to do likewise, and jealous of my friends, my occupations, and the intense love I cherished for the child I had abandoned, he shot himself. Wolverton was avenged.

"But enough of me and my affairs," she continued. "I wished to see you especially in regard to my daughter. I know you will be kind to her. This casket," laying an exquisitely inlaid box on the table beside her," contains some costly gems. See," she went on, as she bent forward to unlock it, "see this diamond necklace; how limpid, how brilliant! Ah! I have always loved precious stones! There's a handful of loose gems below, cut and uncut, all fine and true. That casket contains a neat little fortune, and it belongs absolutely to me. I leave it in your care for Romaine, when you think her old enough to understand the value of the stones."

"I will fulfill you trust," said Christine, gently. Then she added timidly: "You are very ill. Would it not be a comfort to you to see a clegryman, or have me read a prayer?"

Delphine laughed derisively, and between the paroxysm of her mirth she gasped, "No priest or parson for me; but if you think prayer would benefit a sinner, read on."

Christine opened her prayer book.

Soothed by the grand words of the prayers of the age, Delphine closed her eyes. Was it fancy, or did Christine, as she ended, catch the sound of a faint "Amen?" She could never be sure.

At that moment Dr. Bolton knocked and entered. He sprang to the patient's side, felt her pulse, lifted her eyelid, listened at her heart.

"All is over," he said, quietly. Delphine was dead.

EPILOGUE.

"Come away to the shade of the citron grove, Carina!
I hear the voice of the brooding dove, Carina!
Her soft throat swells as she tell her love
To her tender mate in the myrtle above,
And their tremulous pinions responsive move, Cara! Carina!

Two years have passed.

Over at Wolverton's the garden is all abloom, the air embalmed with fresh odors of rose and honeysuckle, of cedar and box.

Dr. Bolton and Romaine are standing in a garden path—he absently staring at a gorgeous sunset, while passing his hand over Wolf's shaggy head. Romaine, enchanting in a lovely dress of delicate texture and indescribable tint, stands quietly by, silently awaiting her friend's pleasure to speak. At last he does so.

"Your father is happy at last, Romaine. Since his marriage to Christine Emery his melancholy moods have vanished. The house itself seems cheerful now, and it used to be so gloomy. What power a woman wields when she is good!"

"Yes," Romaine sighs,

"Alan Emery and Caryl rejoice in their infant son. Ellyn Lynn is married to Tom Allison, and Rosalie, the unconscious cause of their former estrangement, has made Dr. Ward the happiest of men. So there are only you and I, little girl."

Romaine looks up brightly.

"Yes," she says, eagerly, "only you and I. Well—what next?"

"Next? Why, you will be carried off some day by a handsome young fellow. And I will be left lamenting. Nobody would want a crusty old fellow like me."

"Yes, they would," she answers, quickly. "You are not at all 'crusty,' and—and——" she stops suddenly and bursts into tears.

"My dear little girl! My sweetest Romaine! Am I to understand——? Can I believe——?"

"Yes, yes, you are, and you can," she whispers, laughing through her tears.

And at last, at last, this obtuse man discovers what others have known this many a day, that Romaine's heart is his. At the same time a strange, delightful response awakens in his own breast, and he rejoices to find that her love is returned.

"Romaine, my dearest girl, will you be my wife?"

"Oh! how happy I am!" she cries in rapture. "All my life I have loved you, though I knew you cared most for Christine."

"Not now, Romaine, not now. Just you, my darling, henceforth and forever."

The sun has set. The crimson and gold have turned into purplish blue. One star grows intense as twilight gathers. A night bird trills a faint, sweet strain.

Over at Wolverton's all is well.

The End.

* * *

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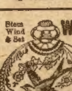

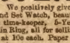

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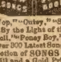

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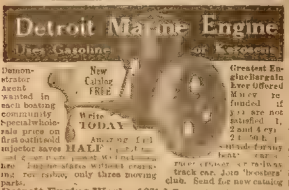

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DRAWBACKS TO MATRIMONY.

THIS getting married," remarked young Mrs. Allison, "isn't all that it's talked up to be!" She picked up her embroidery and resumed operations on a large butterfly.

The other embroiderers looked shocked, with the exception of the fluffy-haired blonde, who giggled appreciatively. "Is Fred developing dyspepsia?" she inquired with mirthful solicitude. "My dear!" cried young Mrs. Allison, with wild-eyed protest. "Fred can eat anything, I'm happy to say. I ran completely out of ideas about meals day before yesterday, so I had fried sole for dinner, to break the monotony of steak and chops and roast, and chops and roast and steak, and roast and steak——"

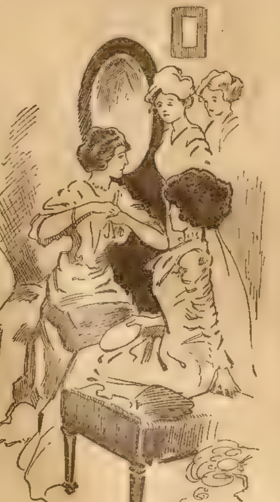
"That will do!" sternly interrupted the young matron with auburn hair. "That way lies madness. Some of us are housekeepers ourselves, you may remember."

"And," went on young Mrs. Allison, meekly. "Fred ate his sole with positive enjoyment, though I couldn't even bend my own. No, Fred is not dyspeptic."

"Well, then, said the fluffy-haired blonde, "he must be getting the club habit."

"Wrong!" said young Mrs. Allison, promptly. "Fred doesn't belong to a single club except the Beethoven. He hates smoke and he likes women, and he thinks that men's clubs are little short of relatively clean pigpens. Guess again."

"Well," said the fluffy-haired blonde, after a judicial pause, "there are only three causes that make a happily married woman sore on matrimony, if you will pardon the phraseology. They are dyspepsia, jealousy and lack of money. Is lack of money the canker that's eating the blush from your damask cheek, or words to that effect?"



"No, Fred is not a dyspeptic."

Mrs. Allison shook her head again, emphatically. "Nobody has enough money," she said, with conviction. "But that's nothing. That's the least of my troubles, and I have as much money as is good for me, no doubt. Besides, a woman's a fool to let money worry her, if it's only a matter of luxuries."

The fluffy-haired blonde nodded assent. "Right you are," she said. "And, what's more, there are fewer fools than people would believe, when it comes to that. But whatever is the trouble, Celeste?

Young Mrs. Allison sighed lugubriously. "What I object to in matrimony," she explained, jabbing her needle vigorously into the left wing of the blue insect, "is this sensation of permanence. Married people feel so disgustingly settled in life, and I loathe felling settled."

Every one smiled.

"Well, times are changing," remarked the auburn-haired matron, with a suggestion of scorn. "Do you notice married people feeling so dreadfully settled these days?"

"I mean decent people, of course," corrected young Mrs. Allison, concisely. "The sense of being hopelessly settled descends upon you when you come down to breakfast the first morning after your honeymoon trip is over, and it continues with you from that time on. When I go to the matinee, or to teas, or to the settlement, guild, or anywhere like that, and see a lot of the girls of just my own age, whom I went to school with, and who haven't married—old maids like you"—she indicated the fluffy-haired blonde, who rose and bowed profoundly—"and see how positively juvenile and effervescent they look, and how delightfully unsettled they are in their attitude toward the world I get pessimistic, that's all. I say to myself, 'Brace up, Celeste! You're a married woman, so hurry home or Fred will be there first and will wonder what keeps you.'

"I tell you," went on young Mrs. Allison, "you can just reverse what the old negro mammy said about spinsterhood and apply it to matrimony. "I'se done hyar'd,' she said, 'as hit ain't so bad when yo' quit strugglin'.'"

Everybody laughed, and young Mrs. Allison joined in doubtfully.

"By the way, Celeste," remarked the fluffy-haired blonde abruptly, "you always used to go South with the Merrits to stay through January. You'll go this year, I suppose?"

"I should say not," answered young Mrs. Allison, heatedly. "Do you suppose I'd go away for a whole month and leave Fred, when he simply could'nt go, no matter how badly he might want to? Why, what an idea! Are you crazy?"

There was another chorus of laughter.

"Oh, well," conceded young Mrs. Allison with a smile, "one might as well make the best of one's troubles."

* * *

Killed in Mercy.

(Continued from page five.)

"And he was the man that shot his wife?" The lawyer's astonished voice arose above the sound of the grinding brakes.

"In mercy," said the conductor, as he left the compartment.

In next week's Ledger will appear another remarkable "Out West Story" by Paul Crissey, called "The Spirit of the River." It is a strange story, and we advise you to read it.

* * *

His Wish Came True.

"Well," said Arbuthnot Witheredge, "I am in luck to find you alone, this evening."

"Oh," replied Genevieve Grandilot. "do you consider it lucky to be alone with me?"

"Why shouldn't I?"

"I—I don't know. I have never thought about it before."

"Haven't you ever wished that you and I might be all alone together?"

"Why should I wish that?"

"I don't know. I wish you had wished it."

"Have you ever wished it?"

"A great many times."

"Why?"

"Can you ask me why?"

"Perhaps I could—could guess."

"Would you care if I should tell you why?"

"I—I don't know. Do you think I ought to let you tell me why?"

"I wish you would. I am going to tell you. It is because I

"Because you what"

"I wonder if you will hate me after I have told you? Rather than have you decide that we can no longer be friends, I would carry the secret to my grave."

"Oh, please don't do anything like that. I am sure I shall not hate you. I could never hate you, no matter what happened."

"Do you mean that, Miss Grandilot—Genevieve?

"Of course. Why shouldn't I?"

"I shall risk all, then, and tell you. I have wanted to be alone with you because—because I love you—because I have wanted to ask you to be mine!"

Then the beautiful girl's mother stole away from her place behind the curtain and tiptoed up the back stairs.

* * *

Kind Superintendent.

A New Yorker, whose business interests frequently take him to one of our Southwestern States, tells of an incident at a railway junction, when he found himself very hungry, but with only two minutes to spare before his train left.

"Give me a sandwich and some coffee right away!" he exclaimed to the man behind the lunch counter. "I haven't time for anything else!"

"Take all the time you want, friend," said the man behind the counter. "Jest have a look at this bill of fare, and I'll 'phone to the superintendent to delay the train a little while."

"What! Hold up the train while I eat?" demanded the amazed traveler.

"Sure thing!" responded the man behind the counter. "This is a branch road, with no other train coming or going over it this morning, and the superintendent would want you to have a good meal. He owns this lunchroom."

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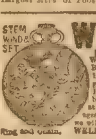

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The Island of Gold;

Or, The Sword of the Sea

By William H. Manning

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE SHIP TERROR.

CAPTAIN JOB waited for no more, but, rushing forward, elbowed the carpenter out of the path and ran up the companionway. He found Mate Pond waiting for him, and the lantern in the officer's hand showed that his face was pale and worried.

"What's this?" the Captain cried. "Chips tells me we are scuttled!"

"Right, sir! Water is in the ballast, and still comin'. Holes have been bored in the hull. We now know why somebody wanted that auger."

"What have you done?"

"Ben Witter, Peter Lund, and others are workin' there. Jackson was in charge, but he came to report, an' I sent him to you with the message."

"How bad is the matter?"

"Nothin' serious, unless we have holes below that we don't know of now. Bein' in ballast it is easy to get at the inflow, an' the lads are rammin' oakum in fast as they can. What worries me is the fact that the scuttler has been able to do his work in spite of us, and that we don't know who he is."

"Them holes," interrupted the carpenter, who had joined them, "were made when my auger first disappeared. The scuttler stopped the flow then, but has lately pulled out his plugs or temporary calkin'."

The Inchwood cousins had kept at the skipper's heels

"Are you sure there is no danger?" demanded Robert.

"Dead sure!" answered Pond. "All we have to do is to stuff in a lot o' oakum an' pay her over with hot pitch, and that settles it. As I said before, the hands are hard at work. Listen!—you can hear the reeming beetle at it."

"Keep the deck, Mr. Pond," said Wood. "I'm goin' into the hold."

He went, and Robert and John kept him company. Being without cargo the hold was not the cluttered place of a ship in merchant service, and the shingle ballasting afforded excellent chance for the work now required to save the Fair Lady. The odor of oakum and pitch was strong, and the faithful few chosen for the work were busy as bees.

Captain Job looked and then gave a sigh of relief

"No danger," he said.

"Not this time,' commented Peter Lund, lifting a perspiring face.

The remainder struck a chill to the hearts of all present. The vigilance of the carpenter had discovered the act of the scuttler early, but the identity of the wretch was wrapped in mystery, and he was liable to repeat his attempt at any time.

Captain Job lingered until the work was fully in hand, after which he returned to the deck, talked a while with the two mates, and then went to his stateroom to get needed sleep. Bad as he situation was, the next stroke of the secret foe was not to be expected that night, and the skipper believed in keeping himself in good condition

At eight bells, the following morning, when the watches were shifted, Wood called all hands aft and addressed them. The presence of the ship-scuttler was no secret now, and he went into the matter fully. After a history of the case, as far as he knew it, he wound up crisply:

"Men, I've sailed the ocean many years an' seen many dangers an' many vile scoundrels. I've been beset by pirates and had my share in mutinies, but pirates and mutineers are decent folks compared with him who will try to scuttle a ship. The man who bores a hole in a ship an' tries to send her to the bottom o' the sea not only strikes a blow at property, but he puts many human lives in peril. For some base end of his own he will kill a ship's crew. Now, we have such a creature here—a secret,, cowardly, miserable wretch, who is the worst thing that sails the waters. We've got him here, I say, an' all want to know who he is. We must know; or we go to Davy Jones' locker some fine night. Now, I want help from all honest hands here. I'm goin' to send you all back forward, an' then have you come to me, one by one, and I'll question every man This will give the decent men chance to pass their suspicions along to me on the quiet. More than that, it will bring the scuttler face to face with me. When I see him before me I'll read him like a book—I'll make him flinch and betray himself. His guilt will overpower him. He will writhe, turn pale, tremble, an' then fall on his knees in coward fear. Oh! I'll read him. I'll read his guilt I'll pull his villainy off him like a black garment! Now, go forward, and then come one by one."

The plan was carried out. Every man passed before the skipper and was closely questioned. Near him stood both mates and the Inchwood cousins. Five pairs of eyes were on the interrogated men, and it was enough the wrest the guilty secret away, if it could be done.

When the cook, the last of the company, had gone his way, it was over Wood turned to Mr. Pond

"Beaten!" confessed the Captain briefly.

"No clew?"

"Not one."

"And no suspicion as to who the scuttler is?"

"Not a suspicion!"

Captain Job bared his head and ran his fingers through his mass of bristling hair He was chagrined, worried, and angry, and he failed to hide the fact

"I bragged too soon!" he added, irritably. "No man quailed afore me. Leastwise, I see nobody even blink an eye guiltily. Did any o' you get an idea who the skunk is?"

Mr Pond replied in the negative, and his answer was echoed by the others. Every man had come calmly, modestly, and yet boldly. Every man had looked into the Captain's eyes with absolute composure. The scuttler had proved that he possessed iron nerves—and this made him all the more to be dreaded.

"No foremast hand has given a suggestion," the Captain added. "All over for now. We are penned in with a fiend in human shape, an' we don't even guess who. All over!"

He walked heavily to the rail end, leaning upon it, looked off across the water. He felt averse to discussion, but the mates and the two charterers talked a long while before the subject was dropped. They talked, but gained no light.

Meanwhile, the Fair Lady was reeling off eleven knots in her flight for Daniel Lee's island. The wind favored, and the bellying canvas aloft slatted merrily, keeping harmony with the creaking of blocks and the song of the cordage, and only one thought had influenced the laying of their course. Mary Lee must be returned to Popoatto.

In due time the landfall was made, and, when the Fair Lady was brought to, half the population of the island was on the beach, and the other half in canoes that had put off at sight of the ship It had been a time of deep sorrow while their young mistress was gone, but with her standing in the bow of the ship and waving her handkerchief, the islanders knew she was back, and their joy was as great as that of her blood kindred. Daniel Lee was home from San Felandre, after a vain attempt to summon a rescue party fit for hard service, and when all were ashore he grasped hand after hand and thanked the newcomers warmly. It was a peculiar feature of this flow of gratitude that he must have given part of his thanks to the would-be scuttler

In Lee's house a general discussion soon took place. Heretofore Arrowpack had left Popoatto wholly alone, and they had grown accustomed to so ominous a neighbor, but Mary's story plainly showed that the descendant of old Poi Boxdall had taken a violent fancy to the girl, and Popoatto was no longer a place to be classed as really safe.

"I wish," said Lee presently, "that I had cannon here."

"You should have," replied Captain Wood. "Surely, you should have. Can't you get them somewheres?"

"Not short of San Francisco, I fear,

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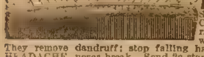

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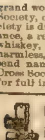

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There are none at San Felandre. It is a long way to the California city. I fear we must do without cannon."

"You shall have them!" said Robert, deliberately.

"Eh? And how?"

"We will go to Arrowpack's island and get the three he has there."

"Can't be done!" declared Captain Job, shaking his head.

"Why not?"

"Arrowpack has something like a hundred men, and as we have been there he will know whether another visit is possible. Lad, I'd say 'yes' to your scheme if I could, but if we venture upon Watihoe's again, it will be death to us."

"Those cannon," said Robert, steadily, "are needed here. We are going to have them!"

"Mr Inchwood," replied Daniel Lee, heartily, "I thank you most kindly, but, as your shipmaster has pointed out, it is impossible. You cannot cope with so big a force as Arrowpack musters."

"We can, and we will."

"How?" asked the Captain gravely.

"It will need a special plan. I don't see my way clear now. I've taken heed to the size of the big guns, and I know that if we are left alone we can get the three to the deck of the Fair Lady. So much for their weight. As to how we can snatch them out of the grasp of the watching pirates—I admit that I lack the idea now, but it will develop. We will have those cannon!"

"If you try, sir," quickly objected Lee, "you will get, not the cannon, but your graves."

Robert did not reply. The friendly warnings fell too seriously to be passed by unheeded, but his purpose did not waver.

John Inchwood, himself brave and ready, had been listening in silence. Mary did not enter into his thoughts as into those of Robert, and he felt that outside work should not interfere with the search for the Island of Gold and its great treasure, but he would not openly oppose his cousin. Now, as Robert continued silent, he came to other business.

"Mr. Lee," he asked, "do you know of a very old native named Gogoti, who lives on an island named Payupah?"

"No. The name is unfamiliar. Stay; I do not recollect hearing it. Gogoti! I think he is, as you say, a very old man, but in his day he led a life of adventure, sailing from the Low and Marquesas Islands to the Carolines and Ladrones, and through the maze of islands between. It comes to me now. Gogoti! Ay, that's the man who was once called the pirate-catcher among his own countrymen, because of his work, in his youth, in suppressing the native freebooters around the Navigator and Society islands. Odd that I had forgotten him, since he was once famous, but he must be above fourscore now—if alive!"

This account did not lessen the zeal of the Inchwoods to see the man whom Mary had suggested as an expert in Pacific lore, and they then and there determined to sail for his home on Payupah. Subsequent inquiry among Lee's natives established the fact that Gogoti was living at a recent date, and was of unimpaired mind.

"The sooner you get to him the better," said Captain Job. "This is the first time I ever heard of a Pacific islander of such great age, and he may be gathered to his fathers any day. We had better up anchor and get away on our errand."

"This means much to us," exclaimed John. "This is the year 1848. Gogoti, if fourscore, was born in 1768. The Sword of the Sea was wrecked in 1686. Gogoti's life as a young fellow reaches far back toward the days when Zeraglio's hoard was buried, and the change in the topography of the Island of Gold may have come about since Gogoti's day. Captain Job, fill your water-breakers and stock us up with yams, sweet potatoes, and what not, and then let us be off for Payupah!"

"Consider it done, lad!"

The skipper soon went about his work, and, with Zattillo as pilot, they sailed the next morning. There was a star of hope in the north, and its name was Gogoti.

CHAPTER XVII

STORY OF A WRECK

They found him on Payupah Island, a man whose hair was snow-white with age, but he was erect of figure and clear of intellect. His expression was mild, but there was that in his dusky eyes and firm brows that told a story of love of peace mixed with ability to meet emergencies like a warrior. And his humble fellow natives regarded him as a warrior. He was the Joshua, the Alexander, the Napoleon of their ocean world, no longer active, but full of renown.

His command of English was not better than Zattillo's, but an interpreter was found among his people and consultation was made easy.

"Yes," he said, "I am Gogoti, and I am very old. Eighty and two years I have seen. It is a great age for one of my race. Aye, I am the same whom men call the pirate-catcher, though that was long ago. When freebooters threatened the lives of good men and women, I organized fleets of my peaceful kind and sailed and gave battle to the wicked ones. I was first a commander in 1791 when I destroyed the fleet of Pedulox, the Malay, which kept that ravaging people long quiet. There was never a year but I fought some pirate, big or little. In 1806 I vanquished Hat Toy, the Chinese pirate from Tai-ping, and slew him with my own hands, and his countryman, Wai Ling, he who was master of Napa-kiang, I put to the sword in 1823. Boabo, the Fiji pirate, I put to rout in 1809, and the three bad buccaneers from the Salomon Islands, they who were named Erlorah, Coashel, and Surcittle—father, son and grandson—I beat one after another. After I was done with Surcittle, the Salomon navigators came no more to steal and murder in these waters, but the Malays I have fought a score of times. Yes, it is true that I am termed the pirate-catcher!"

Gogoti had an appreciative audience as he talked. He showed no inclination to boast, but gave his account as mildly, calmly, and easily as he would have discussed the nature of the yams, bananas, or sweet potatoes which grew on his island, or the falcons, terns, boobies, and frigate birds that winged their way above.

Even Captain Job, despite his long experience in the Pacific, was wrapped up in the speaker and his story, while Robert and John felt as if the modest foe of evil-doers was some highly intelligent American who elected to reside on Payupah.

"Yes," the old man further said, meeting a new question, "I have seen changes in the islands. Earthquakes now and then disturb the bottom of the ocean and change the formation and size of the lands. Since I was young I have seen some islands disappear totally beneath the surface, while others have risen where once was only water. Others have grown smaller or larger, according as the convulsions of the ocean bottom lifted them up or dropped them down."

John had drawn a picture of the Island of Gold, as they conceived it to have been when old Zeraglio sailed the seas, and he placed the diagram before Gogoti and explained it fully.

"A long, low line of gray rock, shaped like a half-moon, and lying under a green crescent," repeated the old navigator. "No, I remember no such island, and I know them well."

"But it may have sunk somewhat?" urged John.

"Yes, surely."

"Now, in the case of these islands that have changed so much, if one sank, how far down do you think it would naturally go?"

"I cannot tell that. Some would go far, and some only a little way."

"Have you ever watched such a change go on?"

"Ah, no! I have been within the influence of the convulsion, but I put about and fled. I have seen vessels sunk in these times. I knew of one ship," and Gogoti grew a trifle more animated, "that, I think, was caught in the rising of an island and left high and dry, a full hundred yards from the water. It was a strange sight to see it setting on land like a house, but nobody could tell me its history, for it was then long ago that it was so hardly used. Whether its crew died or lived I never knew. Twenty years or more I looked at different times upon the wreck as I sailed past, and then fire started somehow, and burned it up. When I was a boy of sixteen years I visited it, and went through its lower parts, the cabin and hold, curious as boys always are. I remember its name—it was the Sword of the Sea!"

The name, carelessly spoken, came at the listeners with the force of a bullet. They stirred abruptly and grew excited. For this had been the name of Zeraglio's ship, and the ship from which Bradyll Inchwood and his associates took the treasure and buried it by the gray cliff.

"The Sword of the Sea?" cried John.

"Yes."

"Are you sure? May you not have forgotten in the lapse of time?"

"I am sure."

"Look ye," interrupted Captain Wood, breathing hard, "if you entered the cabin and hold of that ship about the 1782, it was—ahem!—it may have been almost a hundred years since the Sword of the Sea was wrecked. Would not the wood be so rotten that it would mash under your weight?"

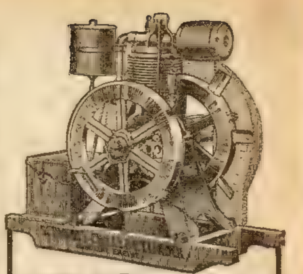
"I don't know when the ship was wrecked; I only tell what I know. The vessel had rotted but little. The stern lay much higher than the bows, and there was a great hole in the lower hull near the latter point, furnishing a way by which all water could run from the broken hold and cabin. The scuppers made a drain-way for the deck, so no water of any amount was ever confined. Wheat meant most of all, the rains that fell had always been offset by the burning tropic sun, and the upper parts of the vessel, inboard and out, were bent, warped, and bulged by heat, with cakes of oozing pitch plastered over wide stretches."

"I see why she lasted," the Captain replied, "but the name of it—had not a hundred years wiped away the name?"

"I saw no name outward, but—and this is very strange to me—on the wall in the cabin the name was very plain in metal letters, letters of solid gold. It was there that I read it, the Sword of the Sea!"

"What else did you find there? What about the cargo."

(Continued on page sixteen.)



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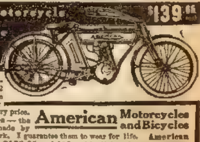

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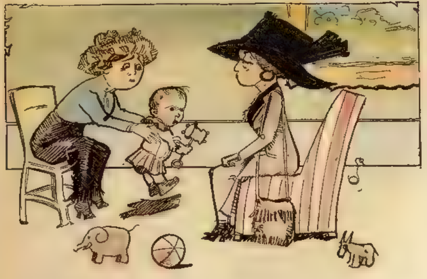


Mrs. Talkington—What, your baby is 14 months old and doesn't talk! Why, my Harold——

Mrs. Psymp—We always think twice before we speak and my little Depuyster has thought only once so far.

Two Thoughts.

Woman (to herself)—It scares me half to death to drive this horse. I wonder what he'll do next.

Horse (to himself)—That must be a woman driving, or I wouldn't be jammed into everything on the road.

* * *

Not Up to Date.

The Schoolmaster—Now, how was it that this great discovery made by Columbus was not fully appreciated until many years after his death?

The Up-to-Date Scholar—Because he didn't advertise, sir.

His Justification.

"The trouble with you, Dobby," said Wilkins, "is that you bother too much over little things. It has become a habit with you."

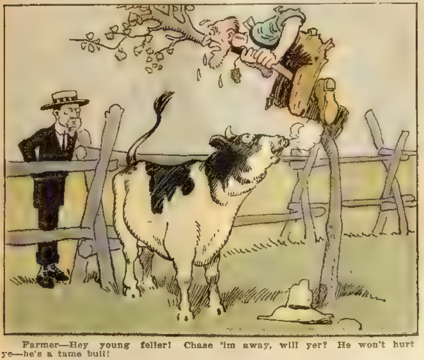
"Well, it would become a habit with you, too, if you had a pair of 8-months-old twins in the house," retorted Dobby

* * *

He Explains.

Mrs. Henpecke—John, why are you reading the marriage notices?

Mr. Henpecke—I just want to see if there isn't somebody married I don't like.—Puck



Farmer—Hey young feller! Chase 'im away, will yer? He won't hurt ye—he's a tame bull!

Glowing.

Wife (complaining)—You never praise me up to any one!

Hubby—I don't, eh! You should hear me describe you at the intelligence office when I'm trying to hire a cook!

A Parallel Case.

"Here's an account of a fellow who took two years to make a toothpick."

"Somewhat overdrawn, eh?"

"Oh, I don't know. I know of a mother who took five years to make a match."

MARY'S SKIRT.

Mary had a little skirt,
Which was so tight it really hurt.
She minced along the crowded street
With two-inch steps, a vision sweet.
Her movements were so very slow
It almost seemed she didn't go
Her costume was exceeding warm,
'Twas but a matter of pure form,
She couldn't catch a trolley car
Could Mary, plump and chubby.
She couldn't catch an omnibus
But still she caught a hubby.

* * *

What it Would Mean.

In a secluded nook they sat, surrounded with palms. He had been buzzing softly for ten minutes.

"But do you understand what it would mean if I were to give you such a beautiful solitaire ring?" he asked softly

She thought she did, but she wanted to hear him say the blessed words. "What?" she cooed

"It would mean that I should have to wear old clothes for a year and live on free lunches."

Then they returned to the reception-room

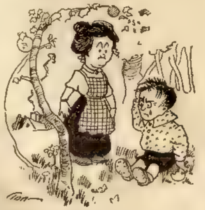
* * *

Sorry for 'Em.

Wigwam—Have you congratulated the bride and groom?

Henpeckke—No, sir, I have not. I may be lots of things, but I am no hypocrite

* * *



His Ma—Now, Freddie, you got that headache from eating green apples.

Freddie—Green apples never gave me a pain that high before.

* * *

She Knew.

"My dear," called a wife to her husband who was in the next room "what are you opening that can with?"

"Why," he said, "with a can opener, what did you suppose I was opening it with?"

"Well," replied the wife, "I thought from your remarks you were opening it with prayer"

* * *

Surprising Information.

Old Lady (pointing to elevated railroad)—Where do them cars go?

City Man (hurriedly)—Almost anywhere you want, ma'am.

Old Lady—Land sakes! I thought they had to stay on the rails.

* * *

Gathering Data.

"The object of the average explorer seems to be to acquire enough material for a lecture."

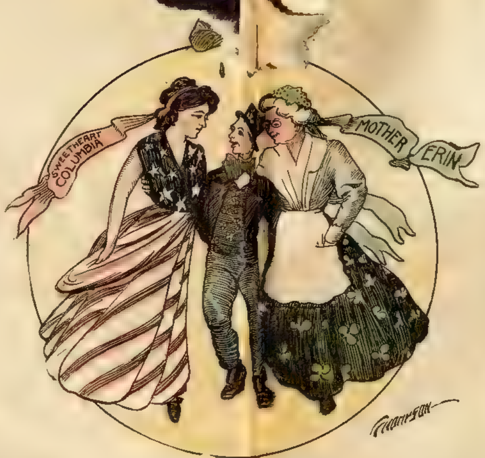
"Yes; that is my wife's aim when she explores my pockets."

* * *

Rich, but Not Beautiful.

Bacon—She wasn't around when they were giving out good looks, was she?

Egbert—No; she was at the other place where they were giving out money.



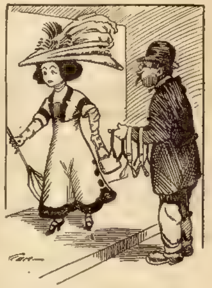
St. Patrick's Day in the Morning

Desperate Measures.

Tompkins—Why did Naplis marry that Ginnis girl?

Lasler—He had appendicitis and no money and she had a brother who was a surgeon.

* * *



Short Sighted Vender (to lady in harem skirt)—Buy a nice pair of suspenders, sir?

Reaction.

"Mrs. Hobem is having a dreadful time with her husband," says the lady with too much powder on her nose.

"Goodness!" exclaims the interested listener. "Does he beat her?"

"It hasn't come to that yet. But after they were married she began breaking him of his bad habits, and soon she got him to quit smoking, then to quit swearing, then to quit going to his clubs, then to quit playing billiards—and first thing she knew he took it all seriously and now he is refusing to allow her to go to the theater or to buy new hats and dresses, or to read novels, or to dance or anything!"

A Neglected Opportunity.

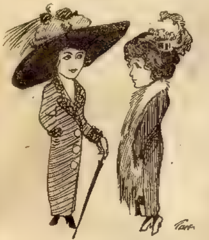
The host and the visitor were walking in the evening on the street where most of the electric signs are displayed Once the visitor stopped

"What is it?" asked the host

"There's one without a sign on it," the visitor said.

The host looked, too. "Sure enough," he agreed. "That's the moon."

* * *



Mrs. A—Where did you go for your new hat?

Mrs. B.—Through my husband's pockets

His Needs.

Mr Payson and Mr Deadbeat met on the street. "I see you've moved again, Deadbeat," was Payson's greeting. "Where are you living now?"

"Over on the next street," rejoined Deadbeat easily. "I made the change because the new place has a high board fence in front with a sign on that exactly suited me as I was trying to get my creditors not to send me any more bills."

"What does the sign say?"

"Post No Bills."

* * *

Equal Rights.

She—I want you to understand before I marry you that I believe in equal privileges and responsibilities.

He—All right, dear; I was intending to give the minister ten dollars, so you'd better hand over five

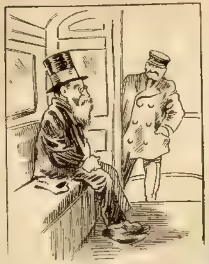
* * *

A Soft Answer.

Old Maid—But why should a great, strong man like you be found begging?

Wayfarer—Dear lady, it is the only profession I know in which a gentleman can address a beautiful woman without an introduction

* * *



Passenger—Which end of the car do I get off?

Conductor—Whichever end you prefer; both ends stop

* * *

Mother's Love.

Mother (near-sighted)—See that disgracefully intoxicated brute across the street! Where can the police be?

Daughter (weeping)—Oh, ma, it's Brother Bob!

Mother (swooning)—Then the saloonkeepers have been drugging that poor child again!

* * *

She Heard About Him.

"There was One Man whose life was perfect," said the Sunday School teacher. "Which one of you can tell me who He was?"

Little Mary Jane's hand went up, and the teacher nodded to her.

"He was mamma's first husband," she said

* * *

Did He Have the Courage?

Mrs Henpeck—You know the saying: "Unlucky in love, lucky at cards."

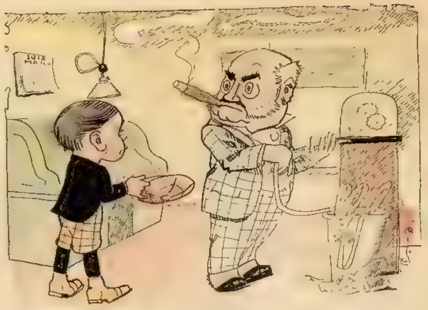
Henpeck—And yet you won't let me play poker. I'd win a fortune.

* * *

Corrupting an Officer.

Gibbs—So your wife's will is law?

Dibbs—Yes, but I can sometimes bribe her not to enforce it.



Broker—No, I don't need an office boy.

Applicant—Wot! Ain't you organizing no new companies dat need dummy directors?

Mistakes Occur.

George—Suppose a fellow's best girl gets mad when you ask for a kiss?

Henry—Take it without asking

George—Suppose she gets mad then?

Henry—Then you've got some other fellow's girl

* * *

Once There They Never Leave.

Gibbs—Does your town hold out any inducements for permanent residents?

Dibbs—We have a very fine cemetery.

Why She Drew Herself Up.

Nell (reading from a novel)—He kissed her on the forehead. The proud beauty drew herself up.

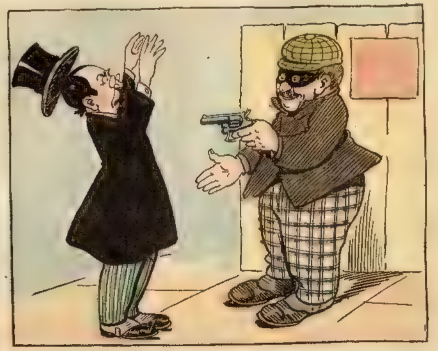
Belle—I suppose that was to get her cheek up to the proper height.

* * *

Painful Task.

Mrs. Housekeep (to tramp)—Why don't you look around for work?

Tramp—I'm troubled wid a stiff neck, mum



The Held-Up—What do you want?

The Hold-Up—I want you to give up. It's Lent.

Shrinks From It.

Bacon—Did you hear what's the name of that boy who's moved in next door?

Egbert—They call him Flannel. Funny name, isn't it?

"Oh, I don't know. He probably shrinks from washing."

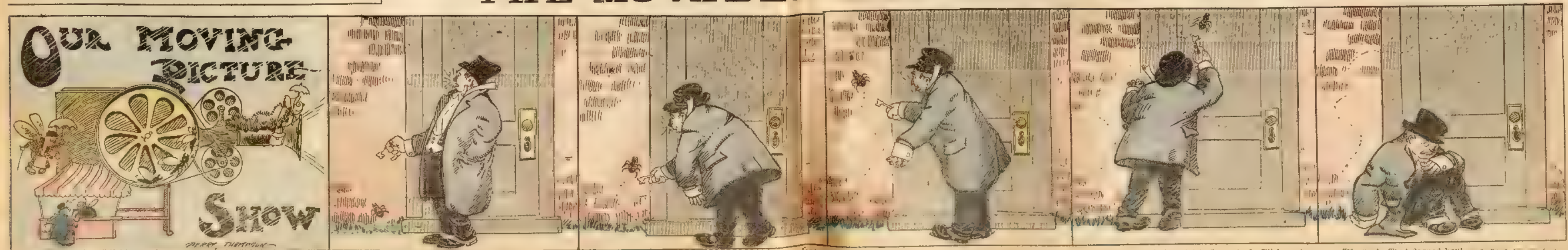
How He Used Them.

Miss Sue—Mrs. Newlywed just cried and cried when she went to her husband's office for the first time.

Miss Prue—Why, Sue?

Miss Sue—He was using one of her biscuits for a paper weight

THE MOVABLE KEYHOLE.



Mr. Boozer (pickled)—Shay, I wonder where thash keyhole is gone to?

"Oh, there it is. Shay, what's matter with that keyhole, anyhow?"

"Keeps movin' round! I mus' be awful stewed! Hold still now!"

"Shay, where's it goin' to I wonder? I'll have to get a ladder, I guess"

"No use! That dasned key! [illegible] of the house! I'll have to sleep out doors!"

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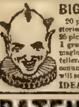

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The Island of Gold

(Continued from page thirteen.)

"Gone, long before. There was nothing of that kind, and no bedding or furniture. It had been taken away or had decayed. I remember finding a belaying-pin, a bent marline-spike, and some minor things of that sort, and, of course, the heavier iron was there. Part of the mizzenmast lay across the broken bulwark, but the main and the foremasts were wholly gone. Perhaps some other vessel carried them off. Oh! I remember that ship well, for I took something away which I have carried all these years since."

Gogoti fumbled at his neck and drew out a small steel chain upon which was fastened a yellow disc. He passed it to Robert, who was nearest him, and the young man found that held a Spanish piece of eight. The date was gone, worn away long before, and there was nothing definite about it, for any vessel of that early day was liable to yield up a piece of eight. The spanish dollar was common in the early days

"Were there no more?" John demanded. "Did you look?"

"Carefully," Gogoti replied. "Boy, that I was, this thing took my fancy strongly. I hunted, but found no more worth having."

They passed the trinket back, and he readjusted it to his neck. It was odd that, in the rush of the discovery, nobody had given thought to the main point, but Captain Job suddenly grew practical.

"Where is that island that the wrecked vessel was on?" he demanded swiftly.

"It is Popoatto!

"What?"

"Daniel Lee's island?" added Robert almost feverishly

"It is so. Daniel Lee lives there, sometimes, and his father and grandfather were there before him."

"Are you sure, absolutely sure?"

"Why, there can be no mistake. I have passed that island not less than two thousand times during my sea career."

But there is no cliff of gray rock there, and no crescent of green over it."

"The gray cliff I have never seen, but the green ridge is there. I know no more. Have you looked there for the gray cliff?"

"No," replied Robert. "At least, not carefully."

"If you think that old, wrecked ship had anything in connection with the gray cliff, better look. Popoatto may have had its convulsion at the bottom of the sea, and new land have been forced upward, or the upper land have been tumbled down upon the cliff"

Robert turned his gaze upon Captain Wood, and that mariner nodded with emphasis not to be mistaken Whether Gogoti was right or not, the skipper was much impressed. Affairs were suddenly put on a new footing. Nowhere else in the Pacific could they hunt for treasure under circumstances in many ways so pleasant as at Popoatto

An hour longer they lingered with the old pirate-seeker, questioning him freely, and learning much that was interesting, but they heard no more about the Sword of the Sea, and gained no further light concerning the Island of Gold. Gogoti had told all he knew that was of value. When they were satisfied of this, they gave him a most generous donation of money, after which they bade him a friendly farewell and returned to their ship.

When the sails were again on the Fair Lady, her bows were pointed toward Popoatto, but the mate had the deck and Captain Job and the charterers were in the cabin in earnest consultation.

"Lee's island is the place!" the skipper declared, for the dozenth time.

"But it is six times as large as the Island of Gold was," Robert demurred.

"Easily explained. A convulsion of nature shoved more land upward. Of course it happened before Gogoti's day. Lads, I've been dubious from the beginning, and many is the time I've throwed a wet blanket on to your hopes, but it's over now. We know where the Sword of the Sea was wrecked, so we know where the treasure was buried."

"But the mate of that ship, the first Poi Boxdall, took away part of the treasure, or so we think."

"If so, he may not have taken all. If all is gone, that ends it. What interests us is that we now know the spot. We will find the gray cliff, we will dig, and if anything else is there, why, we'll find it. But, lads, Daniel Lee owns the island, so all treasure there will be his."

"He is already wealthy, and as he is an honorable man, there will be no difficulty in making terms with him."

"Especially," added the skipper, with a wink, "as he has a fair daughter. Eh, Robert?"

"Go along with you!" retorted the charterer, but he flushed perceptibly

Straight for Popoatto the ship held her course. Arrived there, the anchors were let go and the cabin party went ashore. Without delay the whole story of Zeraglio's treasure was told to Mr. Lee.

"I am truly surprised," he said, thoughtfully. "Since my acquaintance with the island there has been, as far as I know, no sign of a cliff, gray or otherwise, though there is a rocky formation along the line of the ridge. That I have always known. At some points the depth of soil there is so scanty that trees do not grow at their best."

"And you never saw any remains of the ancient ship burned on the lower land?"

"No, but that is not strange. Bits of iron would meet some need of my grandfather when he established work here, and he would take possession of them. Well, gentlemen, we will make a search for that treasure, and if it's found, all is yours"

"No, no!" exclaimed Robert. "At the very least, one-half must be yours."

"Not a bit of it! Yet, wait! We had better find our gold before we divide it. We shall not quarrel over it. Dig we will, and, if you are ready, we will begin now."

At that moment Zattillo appeared before them.

"Masters," he said quickly, "I have news, great news!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE THIRD CANNON.

Zattillo had long before established his right to be heard with respect, and there was no hesitation now.

"News!" repeated Robert. "What is it, Zattillo?"

"This day," replied the islander, "I go in a sailboat to Leptuano to see my kindred and tell them how Arrowpack slew my friends at Beheti. I get some news, myself. This morning that brig you call White Wing pass by Leptuano, and after her come dozen red canoes. She a chase. Pirates very mad at brig's mans

"Eh?" exclaimed Captain Job 'A quarrel on between Arrowpack and Abner Caswell? What's done that?"

"I think I see," said Robert. "Miss Lee was stolen from here by the crew of one of the red canoes, and unknown to Arrowpack, but when she was taken to Watihoe that wretch approved of it. Abner didn't approve, and you know how he tried to get her away. Well, it looks to me as if Arrowpack detected his treachery. That's ample ground for a quarrel between them."

"Fact, lad.' Well, let them fight it out Anything more, Zattillo?

Is it not 'nough?" demanded the native, his eyes gleaming. "See, good Robert, you say you want to steal pirates' cannon. What same as good chance you ever get as when we know Arrowpack away from Watihoe?"

Robert bounded to his feet

"There we have it!" he cried. "This is our chance, surely. Arrowpack and a dozen canoes absent! Glorious! Captain Job, up anchors and let us start for Watihoe'"

It was the eager plan of youth, and it had an echo from John, but Captain Wood and Mr. Lee sat motionless. Their tongues moved, however, and they presented objections and arguments

Even if some of the pirates were away from Watihoe, many must remain, and those absent were liable to return at any time; intruders at Arrowpack's island were likely to meet superior, overwhelming numbers. Also, it was no simple matter to remove three cannon as

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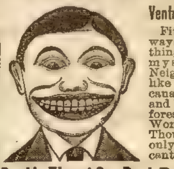

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planned, even with no interference, and, when removed, neither the crew of the Fair Lady nor Daniel Lee was equipped with suitable ammunition for using such big guns.

It was a strong argument, but the Inchwood cousins were stubbornly fixed in their purpose. Somehow, they would get the cannon, and, even if they proved wholly useless, they would no longer be in Arrowpack's hands to do mischief. The point was not mentioned, but both Robert and John had been fired with zeal by the tale of Gogoti's long war upon pirates, and they aspired to emulate his good work and strip Arrowpack of his power in the Pacific.

Opposition was crushed down, and when their elders saw the folly of words they took up the burden themselves.

"We must have rafts to carry the guns from the shore to our ship," said Captain Job.

"I'll furnish seasoned, buoyant wood for them," said Lee. "And perhaps you will need a derrick and additional tackles for hoisting the guns on board. I have ropes, blocks—all you need. Depend upon me for these things."

"I'll have Jackson and assistant carpenters at work at once," added the skipper.

"Some of my servants are cunning with tools," put in Lee. "Oh! we will turn out a job of carpentering that will astonish landsmen!"

Perhaps it was so, for the sound of hammers began in fifteen minutes, and the deck of the Fair Lady and the adjacent waters became a scene of great activity. Captain Wood gained a new idea as time went on. If they were to bring back the big guns it would be well to have them more than dead weight, so, as Jackson's special task, work was begun on a gun-carriage for mounting a stern-chaser.

Long before all was done the ship was again under way, her bowsprit pointing toward Watihoe, and while she held to her course the hammers clattered from knight-heads to the fashion-pieces. Not until the rafts were perfect and the carriage completed would zealous Captain Job feel content.

It was not a night of perfect calm for the Inchwood cousins. Almost in the moment that, in all probability, they knew where old Zeraglio's crew had buried their treasure, they had turned their backs upon the Island of Gold, set sail, and were off on a venture which, viewed calmly, surely partook of the Quixotic.

No longer loyal to one idea, they had undertaken the task of clearing a section of the Pacific Ocean of molesting freebooters. The question pressed sharply—had they done well?

Captain Wood was even less composed than his young friends, but, as Lee had remained behind, he kept his disquietude to himself, and was outwardly calm. Long years of adverture made him fully aware that they were risking a great deal, and he did not see how success was to be expected, but the one chance was to be improved, and it might end well.

Zattillo was the only person in the ship who really was unconcerned. The strains of Malay blood in his veins gave him ample courage, and, though he had much of impetuosity, he also had the faculty of patient waiting. Hour after hour he stood in the bow and looked out into the darkness of the seaboard, moving when he wanted to address Robert, to whom he had taken a strong fancy.

The night was further spent than was to be wished, when they drew near the pirate island, and the light was stronger than was desired, but the latter fact enabled them to raise Watihoe with less trouble than would otherwise have been the case. Having fetched within sight of land they bore down the shore long enough to make sure no house was lighted, and then anchored just out of eyeshot.

Barely waiting to see that the ground-tackling held, the lowering of the rafts was begun, with strict injunctions as to silence. Shortly afterward, the chosen party left the ship, with Captain Wood and the Inchwoods in command. With them were ten of the Fair Lady's crew, and an equal number of Daniel Lee's Kanakas. All were in the boats, the rafts being towed astern.

The land was approached with caution, which was nearly total silence. Oars were dipped, pulled, and lifted slowly and carefully, and the adventurers crept forward like ghosts of the sea.

Robert did not enjoy that advance. Well aware that the responsibility of the venture rested wholly upon him, he also knew that if calamity followed he must bear the blame. And every man who went with him valued his life. Thinking of the possibility of death to the party he began to think, further, that he know how murderers felt.

Fathom by fathom they neared the shore. Watihoe was dark and still. Tree, rock and open ground were alike as if man had never been there; but the houses told another story. Where were the buccaneers? Did they sleep, or were they lying in ambush, waiting to attack the men from the sea?

Perhaps the coveted cannon were trained upon the invaders. Perhaps Malay gunners waited with ready matches to send the projectiles tearing their deadly way through the invading ranks.

Watihoe gave Robert a creeping feeling that was not personal fear, and when the foremost boat touched land he spoke quietly to Captain Job.

"I will risk no general massacre here. Before the advance is continued I am going to reconnoiter. Every man will wait here until I return, for this is my scheme. John, I said, every man. Stay!"

"But, lad —" the skipper began, but Robert cut him short.

"There are no 'buts,' old friend. I suggested this, and urged it on. I'll hazard nobody's life but my own, at first. Remember, I go alone. Wait here!"

He had stepped to land, an easy task, as the water lay two fathoms deep in the cove and the boat had been propelled to the limit.

"Be it so, lad," replied Wood. "We will wait, ready to fight or flee. No oar shall be boated."

Robert scarcely heard, for he was slipping quietly away in the night. Beyond the first few yards the rocks offered their shelter and he climbed the rising land, after which he was soon at its summit. There he paused. It would be no great stretch of the imagination to say that he occupied the central position in the world then. Standing on the height, he had the Pacific on either side, with the civilized world far away and unknowing. Almost at his feet were the habitations of the Malays. He looked down upon them, upon the ocean, and would have done the same as to the Fair Lady and the lesser boats had darkness not prevented. It might be said that he was the visible world, and that no one and nothing else had part. For a moment he forgot his present quest and remembered the treasure from the Sword of the Sea. Was he ever to see it? Was Popoatto really the Island of Gold?

He checked his wandering thoughts sharply, turned and moved on again. He clearly remembered the position of the nearest cannon, but his gaze strayed to the village. Could it be that, after all their warnings that foes were about, the pirates would sleep like cattle and permit further intrusion? Or were they lurking near the big guns, ready to surprise him and deal death to his enterprise and himself?

Again he checked his thoughts, and fixed them on the main point. Beyond him was a candle-nut tree, and he knew the cannon was near. He pressed on, and, presently, his hand was upon the nearer trunnion of the desired prize. He saw nobody, and looked farther for other things. Near him was an artificial pile of stones shaped a little like a hogshead. Getting a theory, he examined this more closely. A door appeared at one side, and, as it was merely fastened with a latch, he soon had it open. The result gave him a thrill of delight. Gunpowder and cannon-balls were inside.

When this was made clear he moved again, and found a second cannon and miniature magazine. He started for the third and last gun, but had gone only a few steps when another figure appeared by his side. He raised his ready pistol, but words came quickly, instead of blows.

"Listen, sea-man, before you go!"

"Oh, it's you, Zattillo!" he exclaimed, in great relief.

"Yes. Me follow. Can't stay when master go. All right, so far, but no more. Gun you not got to yet, it have watchers!"

"Watchers? Who?"

"Arrowpack's men. Likely always there—anyhow, there now. They keep the gun and powder. If so be you go there alone, they kill you."

"What's to be done?"

"Me take them and kill them pretty good deal."

It was as calmly said as if the task was trivial, and Robert felt no desire to order Zattillo back to the boats. On the contrary, he had a moment of helplessness, and was ready to throw himself upon the half-blood as a rod of support.

"What's to be done?" he asked, unconsciously repeating.

"You see knife?" Me kill one before he know what matter is. T'other, he run one, two steps, then me have him, too. Good! Dead mans, he make no 'larm."

Robert wavered. Arrowpack and his men had been the scourge of that part of the Pacific, and Zattillo had much to avenge. He could not be blamed for his plan, but Inchwood shrank from the act of violence. It might be that not all of the island band were willing butchers. He could not bring himself to countenance the plan in full.

"Are you sure they are but two?" he asked.

"Sure!"

"I want them alive. There is one for each of us. We will creep upon them cautiously, and then leap like panthers. It may be—well, I hope we can subdue them without an alarm."

"Hard to do, very! Grab at throat, all right, but if we miss, the pirate mans holler loud. If he holler, his mates wake up pretty quick, and then—then—we no able to beat all them mans. Capture alive? No! Dead mans, he tell no tales."

"But to stab them in the back—"

"Yes, yes; that right way!" cried Zattillo, delighted, for he thought he had carried his point.

"I can't agree."

"Sailor-mans, you want to die?"

"No, but—"

"You have your pick. Somebody dies. Is it pirate or you? And remember

(Continued on page nineteen.)

English Hair Grower

American Rights Secured for
New Drug CRYSTOLIS

Grows Hair an Inch Long in 30 Days —Stops Falling Hair, Dandruff and Itching Scalp—Restores Gray and Faded Hair to Natural Color and Brilliancy.

CUT OFF FREE COUPON AND MAIL TO-DAY

Why Wear Puffs, Pompadours, Rats and Braids of Filthy Chinese Hair When Crystolis Grows New Hair in 30 Days?

Here's good news for the man who vainly tries to plaster a few scanty locks over "that bald spot."

Good news for the woman whose hair is falling, whose locks are too scanty to properly pin up her false hair.

Good news for both men and women who find a hand full of hair in their comb every morning. For men and women growing gray before their time.

Good news for all with itching, burning, scalps, with dandruff, with any and all forms of hair and scalp trouble.

The Creslo Laboratories, 100 C street, Binghamton, N. Y., have secured the exclusive American rights for Crystolis, the famous English hair treatment.

Crystolis has been found to contain marvelous properties for producing a new growth of hair. In subjecting it to various tests in the worst cases of baldness, dandruff, itching scalp, etc., the results obtained by the experimenting chemists were considered almost miraculous.

In every case is was found that where there were any hair roots left it would produce a new and luxuriant growth of hair in from four to six weeks' time.

Gray or faded hair was often restored to its natural color in from 10 to 14 days' time. In minor cases of scalp and hair diseases, such as dandruff, falling hair, itching scalp, etc., it was found that these unnatural conditions were corrected and often completely cured by two or three applications.

Crystolis is a household word in Europe, where it is acclaimed "the most marvelous scientific discovery for promoting hair growth." It has won gold medals at Paris and Brussels.

Better yet it has won the warmest words of praise from those who have been fortunate enough to test its remarkable qualities.

Crystolis has been tried out in America for over a year now. Hundreds of men and women from every state unhesitatingly hail it as a true hair grower.

Here is a statement of just a few of those who have tried—who have been convinced—and who will swear to the virtues of this marvelous preparation:

Mr. Kelly of Memphis, bald for 30 years, says: "My head is now covered with hair nearly an inch long, friends simply astounded."

Mrs. Evans of Chicago writes: "Since using Crystolis can report new hair an inch long coming in thickly all over my head."

Mr. Macklain of St. Louis reports: "One treatment made my hair two inches longer."

Mr. Morse of Boston declares: "I lost my hair eighteen years ago. Have used less than one treatment. My head is now entirely covered with a thick growth of hair of natural color. No more itching, no more falling hair, no more dandruff."

Mr. Boyd of Chicago says: "My bald spot was as shiny as a peeled onion. It is now all covered with thick new hair. The grayness is also disappearing."

Mr. Mourer of Cleveland declares: "Crystolis is the only thing which actually grows hair."

Mrs. Morris of Philadelphia writes after only three weeks' use: "I can see new hair in plenty and it is now a half inch long."

Lewis Nuff says: "New hair began to grow in ten days after beginning the treatment."

Mrs. Jackson of New York writes: "My hair stopped falling the first week. No more itching scalp and hair coming in fast."

Mr. Arnott of Cleveland reports: "Itching scalp stopped the second day, dandruff gone, no more falling hair."

Mrs. Rose of Rock Island writes: "Was almost wild for five years with itching scalp. Two or three applications of Crystolis stopped this. Now I have a fine new growth of hair."

You may be acquainted with some of these people or some of your friends may know them. Write us and we can give you the full address so that you can prove every statement.

But the best way to prove it without the risk of a penny, just what Crystolis will do in your own individual case, is to cut out the free coupon below and mail it today.

This invitation is open to bald headed people, wig wearers, to men and women with falling hair, prematurely gray hair, dry hair, brittle hair, stringy hair, greasy hair, matted hair, dandruff, itching scalp or any and all forms of scalp and hair trouble. Don't lay this paper aside until you have mailed the Free Coupon to the Creslo Laboratories, 100 C street, Binghamton, N. Y. Write your name and address plainly.

FREE COUPON

The Creslo Laboratories, 100 C Street,
Binghamton, N. Y.

I am a reader of Chicago Ledger. Prove to me without expense that Crystolis stops falling hair, grows new hair, banishes dandruff and itching scalps and restores gray and faded hair to natural color. Write your name and address plainly and

PIN THIS COUPON TO YOUR LETTER.

Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

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The Ledger employs no traveling agents to solicit subscriptions, and every person working in that capacity is a fraud. No person is authorized to take subscriptions for the Ledger unless he or she be well known in the city or village where they have been appointed agents to sell this paper every week. A liberal reward will be paid for evidence that will enable us to arrest and convict such persons as are now traveling from town to town in different sections of this country, claiming to be agents of the Ledger and thereby defrauding the people. Beware of strangers.

ADVERTISING.

Advertising rate $2.25 per Agate Line, per insertion, for advertisements in The Chicago Ledger and The Saturday Blade combined. These two weeklies have an average circulation of

1,000,000
COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS.

Often there's more fear than danger.

Faint heart ne'er escaped fair widow.

Every man knows better than he does.

Poverty is no disgrace—if your credit's good.

Girl chums are almost as thick as a fat man.

Man wants but little here below the standard.

But the wage worker has a boss to blame it on.

The man who marries his first love misses lots of fun.

One lone mule can stir up more trouble than a carload of horses.

The less brains a man has the easier it is for him to lose his head.

There are two kinds of husbands, but the good ones are nearly all dead.

A man can acquire an awful grouch if his breakfast doesn't suit his fancy.

And many a man gets what he deserves when he gets it in the neck.

Water cannot extinguish some men's burning desire for something stronger.

Even a woman with a graceful carriage prefers to ride in her own automobile.

When a farmer makes a fool of himself everybody in the township soon knows it.

It doesn't take a woman long to come to the point—unless she is trying to sharpen a pencil.

It is easy for any woman to be an optimist if her hat matches her gown and her gown matches her complexion.

A pretty girl doesn't have to propose during leap year, and a homely one is afraid to—but there's the strenuous widow.

An old bachelor will stay out till 2 a m if he wants to, but he misses the fun of trying to sneak upstairs with his shoes off.

No matter how much a woman loves her husband, it always pleases her to hear that some other man has said nice things about her.

One of the things it is impossible for a man to understand is why a woman cries when there is no reason for it and doesn't cry when there is.

Do your share of work each day, pay your debts, save a little money, talk only when you have something to say, and you will assist the world in growing better.

ANECDOTES OF PEOPLE

Let It Burn.

Three men, one a German, were smoking together and talking over the topics of the times. An odor not of cigars detracted somewhat from the interest in the conversation, and soon became almost unbearable. The German apparently did not mind it, but the other two men began looking around for the cause of the odor, when one of them discovered that it came from the burning cigar band which their German friend had left on his cigar.

"Excuse me, Heinrich," he said; "your cigar band is burning."

"Ach, dank you, olt man," the German replied. "I'm not saving dem."

◆

Not Guilty.

The Medical Times reports the case of Rastus, who inquired of the "doctah:" "What you t'ink is re mattah wif me?"

Doctor—Oh, nothing but the chickenpox, I guess.

Rastus (getting nervous)—I 'clare on mah honah, doctah, I ain't been nowhar I could ketch dat.

◆

A Morose Parent.

"Hiram," said Mrs. Corntossel, "don't you think Josh is makin' a pig of hisself?"

"No. I don't see no signs of Josh's gittin' to be anything so valuable."

◆

A Baked Hat.

The people didn't merely look at Professor Branefog—they stared. He knew he was absent-minded at times, and he wondered whether he had rubbed his face with boot polish instead of cold cream after he had shaved, or whether he had forgotten to change his dressing gown for his frock coat.

But a kind policeman put things right.

"Are you aware, sir, that you are carrying a joint of beef in your arms?" he asked.

"Goodness me!" said the professor. "I knew something was wrong. My wife told me to put her Sunday hat on the bed, to place this joint in the oven, and to take the baby and the dog out for a walk."

"You've not put the baby in the oven, surely?" said the law's guardian.

"I put something in it," said Branefog; "but I don't know whether it was the baby or the dog."

With bated breath they hurried to the professor's home. There on the bed lay the baby and the dog, but it was just as bad for Branefog. It was his wife's Sunday hat that was in the oven.

◆

Not Enough.

The Wife—I do believe I would fall dead if you were to come home early some evening.

The Brute—You will have to offer a bigger bribe than that.

◆

A Beginning.

She—Dear, let us be true to ourselves and each other. Let us have no shams in our lives.

He (joyfully)—All right. Let's begin by firing the pillow shams.

◆

When Scots Talk.

Dr. Abernathy, the Scotch surgeon, was a man of few words, but he once met his match—in a woman. She called at his office in Edinburgh one day with a hand badly inflamed and swollen. The following dialogue, opened by the doctor, took place.

"Burn?"

"Bruise."

"Poultice."

The next day the woman called and another dialogue, opened again by the doctor, took place. It was as follows.

"Better?"

"Worse."

"More poultice."

Two days later the woman made another call.

"Better?"

"Well. Fee?"

"Nothing. Most sensible woman I ever saw."

Her Two Victims.

Attendant (showing visitor through lunatic asylum)—Yes, sir, we have some very pathetic cases here. Now in this room is a poor fellow who lost his reason because the girl he was in love with married another man.

Visitor—Very sad! Very sad! And who occupies this padded cell opposite?

Attendant—Him? That's the man she married.

◆

Tie That Binds.

Bess—What do you think? Her aunt brought Tess only a string of cheap beads from Europe.

Jess—Well, what more could she expect from a close relation?

◆

Not Safe.

"Porter," called the man who was boarding the train for Chicago, "do you think this package is strong enough to trust it to the baggage car?"

"I'll see, sir," replied the burly fellow, and he dropped it with a bang.

"What did you do that for?" demanded the traveler angrily.

"Just testin' it, that's all," was the reply, and the porter let it fall again. "You see, sir, she'll get that first upset at the junction, and the next at Buffalo, and the third at Chicago."

With this he dropped the parcel once more, all the contents scattering over the platform.

"Won't do," said the porter blandly; "never'd stand. Better take the package into the car with you!"

◆

Umbrella Morals.

"You remember that silk umbrella I took from the Bingles' hall by mistake."

"Yes. It had such a lovely handle."

"Well, the handle was imitation and the silk was full of holes. Why, the man who mends all my umbrellas said it wasn't worth repairing."

"Dear me! What did you do with it?"

"Why, I was so mad I called at the Bingles' today and left it there."

◆

Sounded Like It.

The new cook, who had come into the household during the holidays, asked her mistress:

"Where ban your son? I not seeing him around no more."

"My son?" replied the mistress pridefully. "Oh, he has gone back to Yale. He could only get away long enough to stay until New Year's Day, you see. I miss him dreadfully, though."

"Yas. I know yoost how you feel. My broder, he ban in yail six times since T'anksgiving."

WANT ADS

Want and Classified Advertising not less than 14 words accepted for insertion in the Ledger and Blade at 25 cents per word.

HELP WANTED

GOVERNMENT Railway Mail Clerks. Examinations everywhere soon. Prepare under personal supervision of former Secretary Civil Service Examiners. Common education sufficient. Farmers eligible. Write today for Booklet B. Patterson Civil Service School, Rochester, New York.

$2.00 A DAY addressing envelopes. Send 10c for trial supply of blanks and [illegible]. Work evenings at home. Weitz Pub. Co., Dept. 51, Cicero, Illinois

WANTED—Active man in each locality to join this Society. And introduce our Memberships. Sick, accident, death benefits. All or spare time. Make $50 to $[illegible] monthly. Write, Box L[illegible], Covington, Ky.

FREE Illustrated Book tells about over 300,000 protected positions in U. S. service. More than 40,000 vacancies every year. There is a big chance here for you, sure and generous pay, lifetime employment. Easy to get. Just ask for booklet A1034. No obligation. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

WANTED—Railway Mail Clerks—Average $[illegible]. Rapid Advancement. Every second week off duty with full pay. Short hours. No "lay-offs." Examinations everywhere May 4th. Common education sufficient. "Pull" unnecessary. Farmers stand excellent chance. Write for free sample questions and schedule showing examination places. Franklin Institute, Dept. W-31, Rochester, New York.

MEN learn Automobile Business. $25 weekly job guaranteed. Home instructions. Start now; be ready for spring. Booklet free. Rochester Auto School, 872, Rochester, New York

FEMALE HELP WANTED

BE a trained nurse. Earn $15 to $25 weekly. Train at home in a short time. Free catalogue. Rochester Nurses Institute, 872, Rochester, New York.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

DRINK HABIT—Guaranteed home treatment—three days—lifelong result. The only reliable. Book mailed free. Edw. J. Woods, 534 Sixth Avenue, M 356, New York, N. Y.

WANT ADS

AGENTS

AGENTS—Big money distributing free pkgs. Borax-ee Soap Powder. B. W. Ward & Co., 1770 Berteau, Chicago

FENCE Agents—You can sell more fence by selling our Posts and Stays, too. They will make you more business, more money. Twin Post Co., Racine, Wis.

AGENTS Wanted—Agents and general agents wanted, either sex, to sell the new household wonder. Sells on sight; repeat orders assured, big profit for the agent. Send for particulars. Empire Manufacture, Stonington, Maine.

AGENTS—Make big money selling Congo Lac. New water proof coating for Autos, Floors and Furniture; applied with cloth. Write for territory. The Congo-Lac Co., Indianapolis, Indiana.

AGENTS' New Century (Home) Broom. Write for facts quick. Make $4.00 for ½ day's work. Just investigate. Hilker Mop Co., 1220 Grand Avenue, Chicago.

AGENTS—A sale for every call. Needed by every woman who dresses neatly. Newest and best Skirt and Waist supporter ever offered. Girl and women agents make 100%. Sample 25 cents. Begin this week. Sprague, North Cambridge, Massachusetts.

FREE—"Investing For Profit" Magazine. Send me your name and I will mail you this magazine absolutely free. Before you invest a dollar anywhere get this magazine—it is worth $10 a copy to any man who intends to invest $5 or more per month. Tells you how $1,000 can grow to $22,000—how to judge different classes of investments, the real earning power of your money. This magazine six months free, if you write today. H. L. Barber, Publisher, 46328 20 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago.

AGENTS WANTED Exclusive territory. Good chance to build up permanent business. Mail us $10 for 36-pound Feather Bed and receive without cost, 6-pound pair pillows. Freight on all prepaid. New feathers. Best ticking. Satisfaction guaranteed. Turner & Cornwell, Feather Dealers, Dept. 74, Charlotte, N. C. Our reference: Commercial National Bank.

AGENTS Wanted—We want an agency manager in every town in the country. One capable of appointing sub-agents. Proposition appeals quickly to women. Selling plans complete. Live, red-blooded men and women who can appreciate a high grade agency proposition should write us. National Vacuum Co., 10 Brown Street, Dayton, Ohio.

PORTRAITS—Photo pillow tops, photo china plates, frames, sheet pictures, etc., at prices below the lowest and guaranteed. Rejects credited. Prompt shipments; 30 days' credit, catalogue and samples free. Jas. C. Bailey Co., Desk O, Chicago.

FARMS FOR SALE

FOR SALE—10½ acres orchard farm, 600 Alberta peach trees bearing this year; located ½ mile from Netches, Texas. Cash bargain. Charles F. Funk, 27 West Illinois St., Chicago

FRUIT LANDS—Beautiful Kootenay Valley, B. C., 88 acres, subdivided into 2 4-acre tracts, 11 of 5-acres and one of 25 acres. The 25-acre tract is improved, has dwelling, stable, ice-house, etc. All for a limited time at the low price of $6,000. Adjoining land held at $200 per acre. Will cost you nothing to write and investigate. Owner forced to realize thereon. ¼ cash, balance easy terms. Only six hours from Spokane, Wash. Pure water, ideal climate and very low taxes. Address D. B. Dulmage, Morgan Park, Illinois.

BOYS AND GIRLS

GUARANTEED Watch or gold plated bracelet free to boys and girls for placing sample packets Seeds with friends. P. People's Co., B-51, York Haven, Pa

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KREMOLA—"Makes the skin beautiful." This cream removes the surface cuticle with all discolorations, pimples, etc., giving beautiful new complexion; all druggists. Booklet, "Hints on How to Be Beautiful." Free. Dr. C. H. Berry Company, Chicago.

SELF-SHARPENING Shears—The more you use them the keener they get. Fifty cents postpaid; stamps or coin. The W. W. Specialty Co., 1920 Washburne Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

POULTRY

ORPINGTONS! We start you in big money maker! Send 10c today for beautifully illustrated book and Orpington Magazine one year. Cheviot Farms, R13, Cincinnati.

MUSICAL

SONG WRITERS Sell your Song-Poems. Poems wanted at once. New idea. Only way for amateurs to make money. Write now. Fleming Studio, Room 502, Gaiety Theatre Building, New York.

INSTRUCTION

TELEGRAPHY—Morse and Wireless—Railway Accounting (Station Agency) taught quickly. R. R. Dispatchers' and Western Union Wires and complete Wireless Station in School. Splendid opportunities. Graduates assisted. Living expenses low—may be earned. Largest and oldest school—established 37 years. Investment $25,000.00. Correspondence courses also. Catalogue free. Dodge's Institute, Normal Street, Valparaiso, Indiana

MISCELLANEOUS

BARGAIN Three fine neckties $1. Gold-plated Pin free. Ties and pin retail at $2.50. This offer is for short time only. Send $1 at once. Money refunded by return mail if not satisfied. Name colors desired. W. C. Watkins, Parnassus, Pa.

PERSONAL

MARRY—500 ladies and gentlemen will marry; highest characters; send 25c for 500 names and addresses, write direct to them. Dr. Hutchison, Dept. 47, Sedalia, Mo.

FORTUNE Told—Mysteries of life unveiled. Three 2c stamps and birthdate brings wonderful reading. Prof. Millet, Box 725, St. Johns, Newfoundland.

FUTURE, Past, Present revealed. Send dime and birthdate, can astonish you. Madame Irene, 115 Second Street, Kewanee, Illinois.

KNOW Thyself; your future revealed by America's foremost Astrologer. Mail name, birthdate, three questions, 5 2-cent stamps. Reading will surprise you. Prof. Franklin, C Juarez, Mexico.

MARRIAGE PAPER—Highest Character: Incorporated; 16th year; 8,000 members; paper sealed; send 10c. B. W. Love, Box 1600, Denver, Colorado.

FREE—Life Reading by planets. Send birthdate, 4c stamps. L. S. Zandt, Box 865, Portland, Maine.

MARRIAGE PAPER free; best published for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency 55, Bridgeport Connecticut.

MARRY RICH—Matrimonial paper of highest character, containing hundreds of photos and descriptions of marriageable people with means; mailed free; sealed; either sex. Write. One may be your ideal. Standard Cor. Club, Box 607, Grays Lake, Illinois

MARRY—Book of Descriptions; mailed sealed free, many wealthy. The Exchange, Box 525 A, Kansas City, Missouri.

MARRY—Hundreds wealthy members, all ages. Descriptions free. Reliable Club, H. Box 26, Oakland, California.

MARRY—Get a wife. Names, addresses, over 500 pretty girl members who wish to marry and your name also sent to them for 25c. Be first. Address The Companion's Corresponding Club, Box [illegible], Kentucky

MARRY—Photos, descriptions and P. O. addresses of pretty, rich ladies and gents, want to marry, free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minnesota.

MARRY—Catalogue with hundreds of photos and descriptions free. Pay if suited. Select Club, Dept. 6[illegible]4, Tekonsha, Michigan

LOST PERSONS

HEIRS Wanted at once. 50,000 estates seeking claimants. You may be one. Facts in booklet BL. Send 2c stamp. International Claim Agency, Pittsburgh, Pa.

The Island of Gold

(Continued from page seventeen.)

John, he back there, and Cap'n Job, and them more mans. Just remember! Yes, remember Miss Mary and the Island all of Gold."

Robert remembered and was tempted. Why should he not crush out the opposition? Why should a pirate murderer be permitted to live? Better that this deed be done than John and all the others be massacred through weak forbearance on his part. Had he any right to jeopardize the lives of decent men for mere sentiment?

Silence fell between the two. Robert was deep in confusion, conflicting thought. Zattillo, true to the teachings of his race, had given what he regarded as good advice, and now he waited. Judged by the standard of his own people there was not a drop of murderous blood in his veins. He simply advised that the evil-doers suffer instead of the decent men.

Suddenly the charterer stirred again. "No stabbing unless it is absolutely necessary!" he declared. "They are two, and we are two. We will creep upon them and try to overpower them in fight. Come!"

He started toward the sentinels, and, after a gloomy shake of his head, Zattillo followed in silence.

The conclusion of this remarkable story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year, and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

* * *

HER BRAVE SOLDIER.

Miss Mollie Harden had found the park a delightful place in the early forenoon hours. The squirrels were out in full force, every bird had its song, and such people as were about carried goodnatured faces. Of all places to finish up the last three chapters of an interesting book the park had the lead.

And little Tot, 6 years old, Miss Molly's niece, had found the park a regular paradise. There was room to run up and down; there were the sparrows to chase; there were the squirrels to chatter at her, and there were bushes to hide behind and give her aunt a scare.

A quarter of a mile away, Capt. Phil Dayton of the army, who had been invalided home from the Philippines, sat on a selected bench every morning and blessed the park as he read his daily paper.

"Please, sir, I'm losted!"

Capt. Phil had finished his paper and laid it down beside him and was fairly nodding in sleep. He straightened up with a jerk, opened his eyes very wide at sight of the owner of the voice—little Tot. She stood before him with fingers clasped, a very solemn look on her face, and the suspicion of tears in her eyes.

"I say I'm losted," she repeated as the captain continued to stare.

"Oh, I see," he replied. "You came into the park alone and have got turned around and can't find your way out?"

"No, I didn't come alone. Aunt Molly came with me. I ran away from her and got losted. I've been walking miles and miles, but I can't find her again. She'll be awfully scared."

"And how about you—aren't you scared?"

"Oh, no. I know I'd find somebody to take me home. I met a bad boy back there."

"Oh, you did?"

"He's a very bad boy. I stopped him and told him I was losted. What do you suppose he said to me? He smiled at me as he said it, too. He said if I was losted I'd better find myself!"

"And what is your name?"

"Tot Foster. Do you think it's a nice name?"

"I surely do. How far do you live from the park?"

"Oh, we have to take a street car, and the conductor charges me full fare. He told Aunt Molly that I was no kid."

"Well, Miss Tot, I think the best thing we can do is to wait right here for a little time. Your aunt will surely come this way. Besides, there will be a policeman along soon, and we can get him to help. Plenty of room for you to sit down here by me."

"Thank you sir!" said Tot with all the dignity of a married woman; and after taking a seat close beside him she continued:

"I knew you didn't belong to the Black Hand."

"Gracious, no!"

"I said to myself that you were a gentleman."

"Thanks."

"But you are not a rich gentleman? That is, you don't own 10 autos and run over folks?"

"No, Miss Tot. I'm a captain in the army and not a wealthy man."

"That's funny!" laughed the little girl "It wasn't a week ago that Aunt Molly told mamma that if she ever married it would be a brave soldier. You are brave, aren't you."

"People have said so."

"Then that settles it. As soon as auntie finds me I'll introduce you. I guess she's gone some other way. Let's play a trick on her. Let's walk and walk until we find her, and we'll pretend for a long time not to see her. We'll look off to one side, and I'll talk to you and you talk to me."

When they started out on their walk, hand in hand, Capt. Dayton was sure it would be a short one. Miss Tot would have been missed a quarter of an hour ago, and the aunt would be searching, and she would have notified the solemn policeman and others.

But they walked and walked, and talked and talked, and strangely enough they encountered no one looking for a "losted" girl. One of the entrances was reached at last, and the captain asked:

"Does this look like the place you usually come in at?"

"Why, it surely is," Tot answered. "Yes, I recognize it by that squirrel there. Now, all we've got to do is to sit down on this bench and wait for auntie. She'll soon come a-flying, and as soon as she sees me there'll be an awful lot of hugging. That's her way. She flies right at anybody and hugs. But I must know your name, or I can't introduce you."

"It's Captain Dayton, if you please."

"That's a nice name, and I know auntie will be pleased with it. She's pretty particular about names. She got acquainted with a Mr. Chew, but he didn't call but once. She didn't like his name. My stars, there comes auntie now."

It was true. Aunt Molly and a solemn policeman were coming on the run, and just at that moment an auto came up and stopped at the entrance. There were two exclamations uttered that Captain Dayton did not forget for a year

"Oh, Tot, my darling!" from the half-distracted aunt.

"In the kidnapping business, eh—come along!" from the solemn policeman.

And while Aunt Molly was hugging Miss Tot, and being hugged in return, the soldier was hustled into the auto and the chauffeur ordered to drive to a police station.

He made no protests, and because he didn't he was looked upon as a hardened villain. To the solemn policeman it was a plain case. In another moment the captain would have seized his victim and flung her into the auto, and then away to some retreat selected in advance, and then the letters demanding $25,000 ransom.

Oh, it had all been nicely planned, but that solemn policeman wasn't looking solemn for nothing! It was his disguise, instead of false whiskers.

"Got him and it's a straight case," he said to the lieutenant at the desk.

Captain Dayton gave his name, address and profession. He had the documents with him as corroboration. The lieutenant was about to ask him if he thought the police force could be taken in that way, when an auto came chugging up, and Miss Tot and Aunt Molly came hurrying in.

"You just let this gentleman go!" ordered the little girl as she advanced and took the prisoner by the hand.

"I'm sure he didn't intend—intend—" said Aunt Molly, but could get no further.

"And he wasn't trying to kidnap you?" asked the officer of Miss Tot.

"Of course he wasn't! He was seeing me home! Aunt Molly, this is Captain Dayton of the Army, a perfect gentleman and almost my bosom friend!"

A captain in the army, Dayton, did not fail to follow up such an advantage as this.

* * *

She Knew.

On the blackboard were the letters c-a-t. The teacher was trying to teach little Pansy to pronounce the word, but Pansy couldn't do it. "Think," said the teacher. "What is it that has some whiskers and comes up on the porch late at night when it is cold and begs to come into the house?" "Oh, I know!" exclaimed little Pansy, a great light dawning: "It's papa!"

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Now Get the New Edison Catalog FREE! We will send you our handsome new Edison book and full particulars prepaid. You should see our grand new Edison book. It will give you the list of the thousands of records and the machines that you have to choose from. Write today—do not delay.

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The Face in the Storm

(Continued from page two.)

"I will be there prepared for all you ask of me," I replied, and nothing further bearing upon the murder was again referred to.

I took with me a light pair of swimming shoes, and was dressed in light clothing. Some little time before the appointed hour I was concealed in the clump of evergreen. At just ten o'clock Durkin came. Vincent Leichtman was with him. Durkin had evidently made a joke, for both were laughing.

"Let us sit down here on the bank of this lake," said Durkin. "It is such a pretty place."

Vincent sat down first on the green grass. Then Durkin sat down just below him in a position where he could look straight into his face. From my hiding-place I could have reached out and nearly touched them.

"You were telling me yesterday that this weird face haunted you, Mr. Leichtman," said Durkin.

"Yes," said Vincent, "although I have never seen the face, except in my mind's eye, I feel that I know its exact appearance."

"You remember you told me of seeing it in a presentiment, in a mental vision, on the night of the murder?" said Durkin.

"Yes, I saw it," said Vincent. "It was soon after I had retired, and the lights were out. Of course, the room was pitch dark, so that you could not see your hand before your eyes. The mental vision of that face filled me with an indescribable horror."

"When you pursued the assassin through the attic you had come directly from your bed, had you not?" asked Durkin.

"Yes, I jumped from my bed when the Rev. Walling gave the alarm.

"In the dust of the attic floor there are no prints of bare feet," said Durkin. "You must have slipped on your shoes."

"It may be that I did pull on my shoes; of course, I was startled and excited," said Vincent.

"There are two sets of tracks leading from the attic window to your sister's room, and two sets of tracks leading out from it, all of the same size and made with the same shoes, as defects in the soles of both shoes are plainly shown in all the tracks. You are sure you followed the assassin as you have before described?"

Vincent Leichtman made no answer.

"Vincent," said Durkin, very earnestly, "I have been here but a short while but I have learned a great deal. I shall describe to you just how your sister was murdered."

Durkin was looking straight into the face of the man beside him, and noting every shade of expression flitting there.

"When you and the Rev. Walling and your sister," continued Durkin, "retired to your separate rooms that night, the assassin was in the house. You knew of his presence there.

"Then, when you all were presumably in bed, and the lights were out, this monster, with murder in his heart, crept silently from your room, down the stairs to the front door, and unfastening the catch, let himself out into the storm."

Vincent Leichtman's heavy breathing, as he listened to this tragic recital, was plainly audible to me.

"Bent on murder, for that was all that could satiate the madness within him—he was mad—he walked three blocks, and peered into the windows of two houses, but each time, frightened away by the scream of a woman, he returned stealthily to the shed back of the parish house.

"There, from behind the potted plants, he took the ladder and raised it to the attic window. Carrying a heavy stone, his feet muddy with the wet clay that filled the streets, he climbed up to and through the little door into your sister's room. Creeping through into the room, he raised the rock while she slept, and brought it down with fatal violence upon her skull. There was no outcry.

"As stealthily as he had come, the assassin crept back across the attic floor, through the little window, and down the ladder. His madness, satisfied by the terrible deed he had done, and with his normal senses returning, he ran around the house, across the flower-beds to the front door, and entered. Here he made the fatal mistake of forgetting to fasten the catch on the inside of the door. He made his way cautiously up the stairs and to your sister's room, to look upon his ghastly deed.

"Fearing that he might have been heard, he opened the door into the Rev. Walling's room and lighted a match. It was then that Walling was awakened, and seeing the hideous face he has described he cried out: 'Vincent! Vincent, there's a burglar in the house!'

"It was the assassin himself, who, with such avowed bravery, ran down through the dark attic and discovered the ladder in the night's blackness. Then he returned, the lamp was lighted, and the awful scene was revealed.

"There in the death chamber the assassin confessed his crime to the Rev. Walling, and received the appropriate prayers from the good priest, thus forever closing the lips of that man to secu-

(Continued on page twenty-seven.)

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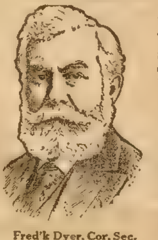

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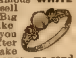

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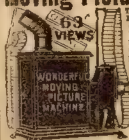

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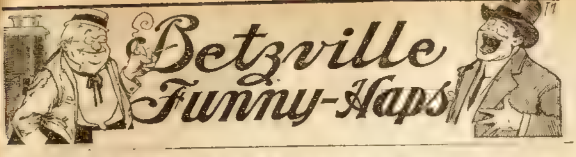

Gubbs' Autohouse

By Ellis Parker Butler

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AMONG the citizens of Betzville, Pilgath Gubbs stands out pre-eminently for thoughtfulness, and it is largely because he once had a grandfather. That grandfather of his is why Pilgath is so far-seeing. In every action of Pilgath's life he remembered his grandfather, and many of us would be better off if we did the same.

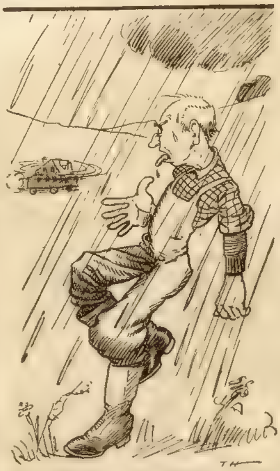
The reason Pilgath dug his well right alongside of his barn was because he remembered that once his grandfather had fallen off the barn and had broken his arm, and Pilgath figured that if he should happen to fall off his barn he might break his arm, too, but that if he had a good deep well alongside his barn and fell off the barn into the well instead of on to the hard ground, the water would break the fall. It was thirty feet from the top of the barn to the ground, and the well Pilgath dug was forty feet deep, and so, one day, when Pilgath did fall off the barn into the well, he went down thirty feet into the water, and was so nearly drowned that it took five hours and three quarts of whisky to bring him to. He saw immediately that if he fell off the barn into the water a few more times he would be totally drowned to death, so he fixed that by pumping all the water out of the well and plugging up the spring in the bottom. After that there was no danger of his being drowned, but the next time he fell off the barn he fell clear to the bottom of the well, seventy feet, and broke two arms and a collar bone. Pilgath was a very thoughtful, foresighted man.

When Pilgath got married and started to build a house he remembered that his grandfather had once built a house, and then had sold the lot the house was on and had moved his house on to another lot, and that moving the house was a lot of work. So Pilgath, being a thoughtful, foresighted man, decided he would have no trouble of that kind, and that he would build his house so that if he ever wanted to move it he could move it without any trouble at all. The only way he could think of to do this was to have the house mounted on wheels, and have a good, strong automobile engine built under the front porch, with a tank of gasoline in the attic over the girl's room. He saved quite a sum on the wheels by using eight old millstones that he had inherited from his grandmother on his father's side, and he got a fine old storage battery at less than cost from Aunt Rhinocolura Betz, who had used it for her rheumatism. There wasn't any electricity in the battery, but Pilgath figured he could get it filled when moving time came. The crank, to crank up the engine, stuck out at one side of the porch, and was soon covered with Virginia creepers, so the house looked like an every day house. No one would have thought it was an autohouse.

The last person in the world to think it would have been Pilgath's second wife. Her name was Arbutus Ann, and she was a timid little thing, and crawled under the bed every time it thundered. She was so afraid of thunder that she crawled under the bed every time a wagon rumbled across the Two Mile Bridge, and when traffic was heavy at fair time she stayed under the bed permanently, and Pilgath had to bring her meals to her on a tray.

Last Wednesday at four o'clock a terrific thunder storm struck Betzville, and Arbutus Ann went under the bed. Pilgath was in the barn, but he started for the house on a run, for he knew how frightened Arbutus Ann would be, but when he was half way to the house there was a tremendous stroke of lightning that almost blinded him. At that he sprinted harder than ever, although the rain was pouring down so that he could not see a yard in front of his nose. He ran swiftly, but in a few minutes he began to get scared, for he had not reached the house, and he let out a few more laps of speed. And still he did not reach the house. Then he was certainly frightened.

A very simple thing had happened. The lightning had hit the chimney and had knocked off a brick, and the brick had fallen on the crank handle and had given it a turn, which cranked up the engine, and the lightning had at the same instant buried itself in the storage battery, filling it with electricity, so that it began to spark regularly and explode the gasoline in the cylinders, and the house had moved away from where it had been. The house had an excellent engine and it was geared high. It was geared to run about fifty miles an hour on the first speed.



He saw the house revolving in circles.

As soon as Pilgath realized this he doubled his speed, for he was afraid the house might meet with an accident. He felt perfectly secure as to the wheels, for it is harder to puncture millstones than rubber tires, but he had an inkling that a frame house traveling at fifty miles an hour should have some one at the steering wheel.

As soon as the rain slackened a bit he took a look around, and he saw the house, about twelve miles out on the prairie, revolving in circles, and he started for it with his tongue hanging out, but just before he reached it the house took a new tack and started south by west at fifty miles an hour, and in two minutes it was out of sight over Reynolds hill. Pilgath said he never was so proud of anything in his life as the way that autohouse took that hill on first speed. When he got to the top of the hill he could see only a cloud of dust in the southwest about fifty-two miles away. He said that cloud of dust assured him that the storm had been merely local.

Pilgath wants to announce that if any one finds a house running around loose with a wife under the bed in the first bedroom at the top of the stairs to the left as you go up, that wife is his. He says any doubt on the subject may be removed by making a sound like thunder Hammering on a tin waiter will do. If, at the sound, the wife backs so far under the bed that she can only be reached with a broom, there need be no doubt that her name is Arbutus Ann Gubbs. The finder will please feed her until called for.

Read next week's "Funny-Hap," which is all about "Rastus Diggs and His Mother-in-law" If you don't laugh at it we will miss our guess.

* * *

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Because Mrs. Stanton is the daughter of one doctor, the daughter-in-law of another, and the wife of a third, nearly everybody was much amused when she attended a course of "first aid" lectures and received instruction as humbly as the other villagers

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"How?" returned the visitor

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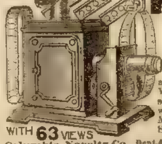

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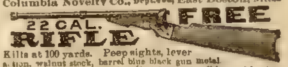

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The Young Settlers;

Or, In the Days of Daniel Boone

By Captain Jack Judson

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Begun in No. 9, March 2. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER VII.

CLUBS ARE TRUMPS.

NO TWO border boys were ever in such dire peril as our young friends, Jack and Justin. Having escaped the stake by the interference of Lucy McDonald, or Gentle Fawn, as she was known among the Indians, they were yet to be subjected to a trial almost as great. There seemed no escape from the gantlet. They had heard stories of this dreaded ordeal—Kenton had told them how he had once run it, and Old Baldy had passed through the same adventure. The latter, hardly expecting that the boys would ever be confronted by such danger, had given them some sage advice which promised to come handy now.

When they saw the boys and squaws of the village come back from the forest laden with all sorts of clubs and sticks, they inwardly shuddered. The cudgels were stout enough to inflict terrible punishment, for the savages were vengeful, and were determined to beat the young captives to the ground.

A stake had been set up at the lower end of the Shawnee town. It had been stained with all colors known to the red men, and Jack and Justin knew that, according to Indian rules, the person who reached the stake would be granted a sort of freedom, though he would still be a captive.

The Indians hastened to form a living lane, with a space of six feet between the lines. On each side warriors, women, and youths ranged themselves, armed with clubs and ready for the game. The boy prisoners watched these proceedings with startling interest. The narrow lane seemed a way to death, for there was but little chance of escaping the blows which their enemies stood ready to deal.

Black Panther, dressed as became the great war chief he was, advanced to the center of the open place and cried out:

"The white boys will run for the stake of liberty. If they reach it, they shall become Shawnees and follow the fortunes of the tribe. Let them be cunning and watch the clubs."

The boys braced themselves for the trial.

"Remember Old Baldy's story," whispered Justin. "Take the left side of the line when you have broken through at the head of it. Jerk the club from the old squaw on the left. I will chance it with the boy on the right."

The next moment the mantle of skin which Black Panther had held over his head was thrown to the ground as signal for the start, and a wild shout rose from his lips.

"Now!" cried Justin.

The boys started off simultaneously. Jack darted straight at the head of the line and wrenched a club from the uplifted hands of the foremost squaw, and Justin robbed the first Indian youth of his cudgel. Instead of plunging down the center of the line they kept on the outside. The savages turned at this unexpected trick, and filled the air with discordant yells. One side of the ranks turned upon Jack, and the other rushed at Justin.

The boys, goaded on by grim determination, swung their clubs right and left. It was dangerous for their maddened foes to come within the sweep of the circle they made.

On they went. More than one Indian was beaten down, and a young buck who threw himself before Justin received such a blow that he toppled backward unconscious.

It was surely a race for life. Hatchets were thrown at the flying boys, clubs seemed to fill the air, and perfect pandemonium reigned on every hand.

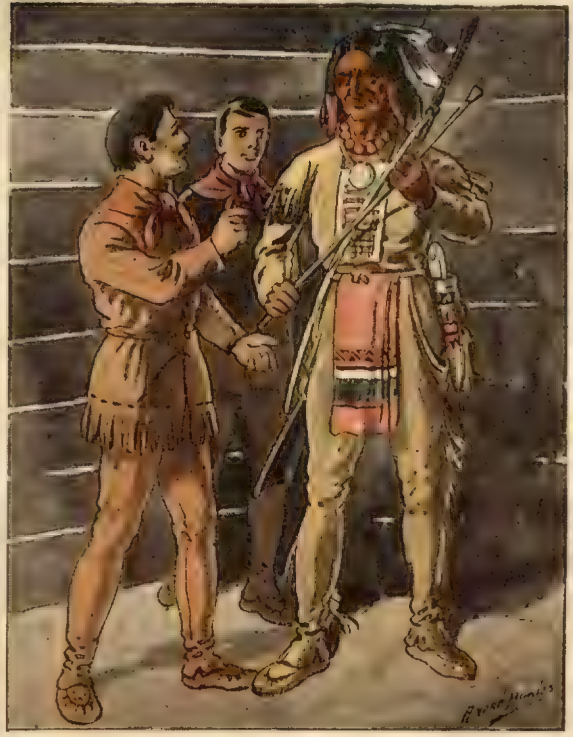
The safety stake was never out of the young heroes' sight. Jack reached it first, and when he looked around for his companion in dole, he saw him on the ground, having been struck down by a flying tomahawk, when almost within reach of the goal.

It took but a moment for him to gain Justin's side. He seized him by the collar, and by main force dragged him forward and landed him against the stake. The crowd, deprived of their fiendish sport, rushed forward to deal the finishing blows.

Suddenly, in a voice of thunder, the command of Black Panther rang out.

"Back!" he cried, as he came on by leaps and bounds, his visage darkened by rage and his hatchet in midair. "The white boys have outtricked the Shawnees. They shall live!"

The mad mob drew sullenly back. They glared like tigers at the boys, who stood by the stake panting heavily as the result of their terrible experience. Ten feet more and they would have failed.



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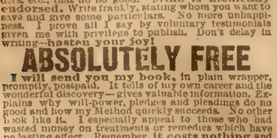

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They were escorted back by Black Panther himself.

"Who told white boys how to trick the Shawnees?" he inquired.

"The birds of the wilderness," grinned Jack.

The old chief shook his head.

"Many moons ago," said he, "a white man did the same trick. He killed Gray Hawk before he got to the stake. Boys good runners and brave," and there was a look of genuine admiration in the Shawnee's eyes

After the gantlet the boys were taken back to their prison and thrown inside.

"It was a close call, eh, Jack?" said Justin, as he laughed over their narrow escape.

"Yes, and we have to thank Old Baldy for it," was the answer.

They were now given all the food they wanted, and after their fast they did ample justice to it.

"I wonder what will come next?" queried Jack.

"Some more dangerous devilment, I suppose."

Strange to say they were not disturbed during the remainder of the day.

As the shadows grew long, velvet footsteps approached the hut, and now and then the door was opened and faces peered in. The boys did not greet the curiosity seekers, and they soon went away.

All at once something fell at their feet Justin picked it up, and unwrapped the wolf skin in which something seemed to be concealed.

"Look!" cried he, turning to Jack. "We are not friendless in this nest of red vipers."

The boys gazed with all eyes upon the contents of the wolfskin, for they consisted of two knives and two tomahawks.

"Gentle Fawn, no doubt," suggested Justin.

"We have no other real friend in this village."

They concealed the weapons underneath the cot of skins, and resumed their vigil.

The rising moon soon made the Indian village almost as light as day. They stood at the cracks of the hut and looked out upon the main square. There was a commotion among the Indians, and all were hurrying toward a given point.

"Woe to the great foe of the Shawnees!" they heard a stentorian voice cry out. "He has killed three of the bravest warriors of the nation. He fell into the hands of the Shawnees, but he tricked them by saying there was powder beneath the floor of the white boys' hut, and when we looked he became a living panther and killed the warriors."

"Who did this great deed?" asked Black Panther.

"Who but the old man called Winnemasto, the Slayer?"

A terrible cry of vengeance rose on every side.

"Why did not Crouching Catamount kill the beast?"

"He was fortunate to get away with his life, but he lives to slay Winnemasto."

The listening boys looked at each other in silence.

"Could it have been Old Baldy?" inquired Jack.

"It must have been he. Kenton's Indian name is not Winnemasto. The Shawnees must have fallen afoul of our old friend."

All night there was but little sleep in the village of the Shawnees.

Jack and Justin felt that their lives were still in danger, for the savages whom they had outwitted at the gantlet were chagrined over their defeat, and were liable at any time to take vengeance. Ready to defend themselves with the weapons which had been cast into the hut, the boys stood on their guard. Minutes seemed hours, and they were doubly thankful when the first streaks of morning came and they had not been molested.

During the day they were kept inside the hut, and another night came on apace.

"Another arrival," said Justin, who was at the crevice. "Come here, Jack."

Within a few yards from the hut stood a tall figure arrayed in full Indian costume. He was fully revealed in the soft light of the moon, and the boys saw him surrounded by a number of Shawnees.

"Tishamingo has come to offer his services to the Shawnees, who are his brothers," they heard the stranger say. "He hates the whites as he hates the rattlesnake that creeps through the forest. The pale faces have killed Tishamingo's kin, and he has struck again and again, but his vengeance is not yet satisfied. He calls for blood. Where Black Panther leads Tishamingo will follow with naked hatchet. He fears no man. He will lead the Shawnees to Boonesborough, and slake his revenge in the blood of the pale faces!"

"What a demon!" cried Justin.

"Oh, they're all alike."

A few words which were not overheard passed between Black Panther and the new arrival.

"Where are the white boys?" suddenly cried Tishamingo. "The Wyandot would look upon their hated faces."

The hand of the Shawnee war chief pointed toward the hut.

"They are yonder," he said. "But our Wyandot brother must not take their lives."

"Tishamingo promises to spare," was the reply. "He will look at them, and then follow Black Panther to the war trail."

The boys saw the newcomer whirl on his heel and stride swiftly toward their prison. They sprang to the concealed weapons, and placed themselves in an attitude of defense.

The tall figure was in advance of all. The captives watched it as it came on like a cloud of destruction, a naked hatchet in one hand and hatred in their flashing eyes. They drew back from the door.

Suddenly it was thrown open, and a cry which chilled their blood soared to the sky. Between them and the silver moon towered the striking figure of Tishamingo. They saw the eagle feathers in his head-dress, and held their breath as they counted the pulsations of their hearts.

"Woe to the white spawn!" they heard him say, and then his voice dropped to a whisper:

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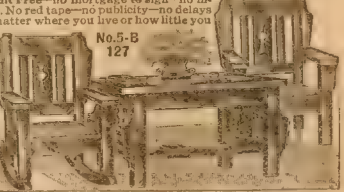
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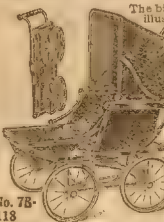
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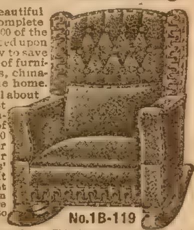
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The boys could hardly believe their ears. Tishamingo was Old Baldy!

CHAPTER VIII.

A SPRINT FOR LIFE.

Jack and Justin knew that should Old Baldy be discovered, his life would not be worth the few remaining hairs he had on his head. He had risked his very existence by coming to the Shawnee town, and his Indian cunning stood him in good stead.

"It's a ticklish job, I know," he proceeded, after a little pause, "but I've been in tight places afore now, and always got out o' them. I thought as how I would see what had become o' ye. Hed ter run the gantlet, they tell me, an' old Black Panther says ye played the hull lot a trick by scamperin' down the outside of the line.'

"We didn't forget what you once told us," replied Justin. "It was a narrow escape as it was, though the trick worked."

"I fancy the reds will get onto it after awhile," replied Old Baldy, with a smile. "I played it myself once to their sorrow."

The old backwoodsman now withdrew, saying that he intended to remain some time in the village, with the intention of getting them out of durance, though the boys had misgivings as to the success of any scheme he might formulate. They saw his lean figure go back to a group of warriors who had waited for him.

"You've got the young foxes well holed," he remarked to Black Panther, in the Shawnee tongue. "I don't like their looks, but ef you could tame them they would make fine warriors."

The old chief smiled.

"Does my Wyandot brother know the trails of the forest?" he asked.

"None knows them better than Tishamingo," was the reply.

"Would he follow Black Panther to the forts of the pale faces beyond the great river?"

"Would Tishamingo eat a deer when he was hungry?'

"It is well, brother. Tishamingo shall soon be on the warpath."

With this Old Baldy was shown to an unoccupied lodge and told to make it his home during his stay.

When the middle of the night came there stalked into the heart of the village a solitary man who paused in the center of the square and looked around. All at once he sounded a cry which caused a scampering from the tepees, and he was soon surrounded by a number of braves. The newcomer was Simon Girty, the great renegade of the frontier.

Old Baldy looked out from his lodge, and his gaze fell upon the familiar figure of the white man.

"There's a new crimp in my rope," he said to himself. "Simon is here for no good, but I reckon Old Baldy is able to cope with him."

He slunk back into the lodge and fell to reflecting.

"What's to be done must be done quickly, with that white skunk in the village," said he. "Simon will be nosin' around, and his eyes are as keen as a fox's."

He waited till past midnight before he made another move. When he crept forth the heavens were obscured, and the moon was not to be seen. Old Baldy made his way toward the prison that held our young friends A light tap on the door brought them to the threshold.

"We've got ter get out o' this red hornets' nest," he declared. "Simon Girty has just arrived, an' he has his eyes with him."

The name had a terror for the boys.

"Simon Girty?" they echoed in one breath.

"That very varmint. I've no burnin' desire to meet him just now. We'll give 'em the slip while we kin."

It required but little time for the boys to separate themselves from the hut, and in a few moments all were stealing from the village.

"I don't like to leave our friend Lucy McDonald in the clutches of the Indians," suddenly said Jack.

"Oh, the girl who checked Mike Nullen when he was about to throw his hatchet?"

"Yes."

"They won't harm her."

"But she deserves freedom from captivity."

At that moment a footstep fell upon every ear, and Old Baldy sprang aside and clutched a slender arm.

"You're going away?" said a low voice.

"We're gettin' out the hornets' nest," was the answer.

"It is time,'" replied Lucy, the captive. "Simon Girty already suspects."

"What did I tell you?" cried the old hunter, turning to the boys. "It is flight or fight, and just now I prefer the former."

"Will you take me along?" pleaded the beautiful captive.

"Sartainly," answered Old Baldy. "I guess you know the forest pretty well?"

"As the deer knows it," was the proud rejoinder.

"Come, then. We'll have to make the leaves break under our feet for these Shawnees, like the fox, sleep with one eye open."

The little party was soon beyond the confines of the village. Not far away was a small rise upon the summit of which they paused and looked back.

"Look!" suddenly cried Old Baldy, stretching forth his hand. "The red wasps ar' swarmin'. Look over yonder."

Such indeed seemed to be the case, for lights were darting hither and thither, and figures could be seen rushing in every direction.

"Now tighten yer belts," he said, turning to his companions. "Yer scalps are in danger, but I've got none to be looked after."

They darted down the slope and plunged into the forest. Certain it was that they would soon have the red marauders of the backwoods on their trail.

It was many miles to the great river and far beyond that stood the goal of safety. Gentle Fawn proved herself as good a runner as any of them. She was as nimble as the animal after whom she had been named, and she easily kept up with her friends.

All at once the forest behind them rang with the yells of their pursuers. Old Baldy looked back and clutched his rifle as he bounded on.

"This way!" cried Lucy, suddenly pointing to the left. "The river is nearest down yonder."

"Right you are, girl. Let every one tie wings to his heels for we're in for a great sprint."

The fugitives, having had a moment's breathing spell, started off again with renewed spirit.

The yells behind them grew strangely quiet at last

"It's the silent hound that is most to be feared," remarked the old frontiersman. "Don't think for a minute that the reds have given up the chase"

"Halt!" he exclaimed, a few minutes later. "I'll go back an' reconnoiter"

The trio did not like to see him depart, but knew that protest would be useless. Old Baldy soon disappeared. He ran back over the trail with the cunning of the warrior. His long-barreled rifle was carried half carelessly in his right hand, and he dodged obstructions as though he had the vision of the night hawk. Presently he stopped beside a tree and waited.

There was an ominous pit-a-pat among the leaves which had lately snapped beneath the feet of the little band. The old hunter knew what it meant. Suddenly, in the moonlight, which sifted dimly through the foliage, he caught sight of an advancing figure. His eyes did not deceive him.

Leaning his weapon against the tree, he drew his knife and held his breath In a moment the pursuing warrior came abreast of him. There was a sudden bound on the old man's part, a blow and a hollow gurgle, and an Indian dropped at his feet.

"I'll leave the jaws of the trap open," he chuckled to himself. "It has often caught two foxes the same night."

Certain sounds told him that there was more than one savage on the trail, for the same pit-a-pat had fallen upon his keen ears. Another bounding form was plunging through the timber.

Once again the old man's arm shot out, and another Shawnee dropped beside the first, without so much as an audible sound.

"I guess I kin go back now," he ejaculated, and in another moment he was running toward the sp t where he had left his young companions.

All three started as the old man appeared suddenly before them.

"What luck?" asked Jack.

"Two more relics for the cabin wall," was the reply, as Old Baldy shook two bleeding scalps in their faces.

"They would come into the trap," said he, with a grin. "An' it was the duty o' the trap to close when they got inside."

The journey was now resumed. Old Baldy proved that he knew the forest as well as Gentle Fawn.

'Yonder's the little river that flows into the big one," he suddenly exclaimed. "We might find a canoe moored to the banks."

Bursting out of a fringe of timber they came almost suddenly upon a stream that ran swiftly toward the south. The old backwoodsman plunged into a bit of shore shrubbery, and began to search it for an Indian canoe.

"Jest as I thought," the others heard him exclaim. "Here's the canoe!"

He pulled the find from its hiding-place, and drew it into the open.

"Quick!" he cried. "I hear the varmints behind us."

Lucy and the boys sprang into the canoe, which was a roomy affair, and Old Baldy whirled on his heel. They saw his figure straighten in the dim light, and his rifle clicked at his shoulder There was a spurt of fire and a shrill report, and some distance back of the little river a cry of pain.

"One more," came from the old man's lips

He began to reload as he stepped into the canoe, which was immediately shoved from the bank.

"Pull for your lives!" he cried.

There was no need of this command, for the boys had already bent to the oars The light craft, though heavily laden, shot from the shore and was headed toward the middle of the stream The next minute the bank seemed lined with Indians. Bullets whistled around the fugitives' heads, and Jack, dropping an oar, spun half way round, but did not fall overboard. Old Baldy sprang to his feet, and brought down another Indian who had unwittingly exposed himself to his deadly aim.

That there were other canoes in the vicinity was speedily proved by the Indians dragging them from concealment, and soon four were racing through the water after the fugitives

"It's Boonesborough or the stake'" cried the old man, discharging his rifle, among those in the foremost boat, and Gentle Fawn, raising the weapon she had brought with her, followed his example. Both shots told, but they did not deter the Shawnees.

The middle of the stream had now been reached, and our imperiled friends were racing toward the other bank. At this exciting moment, half a dozen forms were seen on that shore, and Old Baldy shut his teeth hard.

"Between wolf and wolf!" the others heard him say.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RED HORDE COMES

For a moment the occupants of the boat seemed to be paralyzed with fear. If the shadowy forms on the bank toward which they were steering were enemies, then their escape was impossible. Old Baldy stood erect, with his gaze riveted on the figures, while he kept his rifle firmly gripped. There was a stern expression on his weather-beaten face, and our young friends watched him with bated breath.

"Come on!" suddenly rang out from the shore. "We are friends," and with this a volley was poured into the teeth of the Shawnees.

Sims uttered a cry of joy, and turning in the canoe, sent a well-aimed shot into the foremost boat, which sent one of the painted fiends headlong into the water. Jack and Justin now bent to the oars with renewed hope, and the canoe, having crossed the middle of the river, spun at a rapid rate toward the haven. Checked by the telling shots from the bank, the Indians slackened pursuit, and in a few moments the hunted ones leaped ashore and found themselves among a scouting party of whites.

If the scouts had had canoes they would have pursued the Indians, but they were permitted to return to the opposite bank, from which they disappeared into the forest, taking their dead and wounded with them.

The journey to Boonesborough was without incident, and the young borderers were hailed as beings risen from the dead. Old Baldy cut quite a figure in his Indian war-dress.

"I'd make a pretty good red varmint, don't you think?" he would exclaim, as he surveyed himself. "It was as much as I could do from goin' out and layin' hands on that dirty imp, Simon Girty If it hadn't been for the boys bein' in the village, I'd hev risked it, an' probably left what little hair I hev left on one o' their scalp poles."

Boone was rejoiced at the escape of

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......Kidney Trouble
......Bladder Trouble
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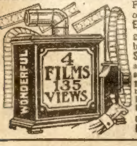

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Jack and Justin, and welcomed them to Boonesborough.

"We're going to have a regular siege," he said. "It's coming just as sure as the sun rises, and we need every man in the settlement."

Not long afterward Simon Kenton returned to the fort. He brought news of the intentions of the Indians, and said that they were likely to be aided by British soldiers, for the War of the Revolution was going on at the time.

"That suits me," cried Old Baldy. "I haven't had a chance to pick off a King's soldier, an' I know Old Neverfail won't miss when I pull the trigger."

Kenton was not yet on good terms with the boys, because of their refusal to have Red Mink, their late captive, brought to trial by a lot of hot-headed backwoodsmen. He eyed Jack and Justin with no good grace, but the young foresters gave him as keen looks as he sent.

The sentries of the fort were now doubled at night. According to Kenton, the enemy was liable to appear at any moment. Black Panther, goaded to revenge by the escape of his young prisoners and the work of Old Baldy, would hasten to show his hand in the most merciless manner.

It was about sundown, the second night after the escape, that a yell was heard in the woods near the fort, and there appeared more than two hundred Indians, arrayed in all the garb of war. They were careful, however, to keep beyond range of the settlers' rifles, though they were easily seen in the waning light.

The men of the fort got ready for the contest. Every weapon was carefully loaded, and the little garrison was stationed at the proper places to resist the attack. All at once a man was seen advancing toward the stockade, carrying a white rag on a ramrod.

He came on till he was hailed by Boone, whereupon he halted and cried out:

"We demand the surrender of the fort. We have six hundred Indians in the forest, and they are determined to reduce the fort unless it is promptly surrendered."

"It is Simon Girty," said Kenton.

Boone was about to reply to the speech, when Old Baldy mounted the stockade in full view.

"Hello, Simon," he cried out. "So you want us to put ourselves into the hands of the scarlet fiends? How considerate it is of you. I have a dog named Simon Girty, but I'm goin' to shoot him. He's a mangy cur, not worth a penny, in which he is just like you. I called him Simon Girty because o' his worthlessness, but the name fits him well."

Those who were watching the king of renegades saw his dark eyes flash.

"I deal with Colonel Boone, not with you, Sims," he said, trying hard to curb his indignation.

"I answer for every man, woman an' child in Boonesborough," was the reply. "Go back to your red vipers, Simon, an' be thankful that Old Baldy doesn't drop you in your tracks as he ought to do."

Girty turned on his heel, with a border oath, and tramped back to the Shawnees. As he joined them a volley was fired at the fort, but the leaden missiles buried themselves harmlessly in the heavy logs.

By degrees, taking advantage of some trees, the Indians advanced toward the fort, whereupon Old Baldy turned to Boone with a knowing look.

"I think Old Neverfail kin reach 'em," he said.

"You might try," was the answer.

Old Baldy coolly thrust the muzzle of his long rifle through one of the stockades and took deliberate aim. As he pressed the trigger, a sharp death cry was borne to the fort, and the old man dropped his gun to his side.

"I guess they'll keep out o'reach for a spell," he exclaimed. "I had an extra charge o' powder in the old gun, an' it surely did its duty."

It promised to be a night of fear and peril. Darkness swooped down upon the scene like the black pall of fate.

Jack and Justin were stationed at one of the angles of the stockade, with instructions to be on the alert.

"I'm glad we brought Lucy McDonald off safely," said the former. "She has suffered enough at the hands of the Indians, and will now see some pleasure in life."

"Yes, Jack. She deserves the best fortune has in store for her," answered Justin. "It seems to me that Simon Kenton has no regard for the girl, for he seems to believe that she still yearns for her Indian life. He hates everything red so much that he cannot trust anything that was ever associated with the red tribes."

At that moment a terrible volley was poured at the fort, and one man was killed.

"Where is Lucy?" asked Jack.

"I have seen her but once since we escaped."

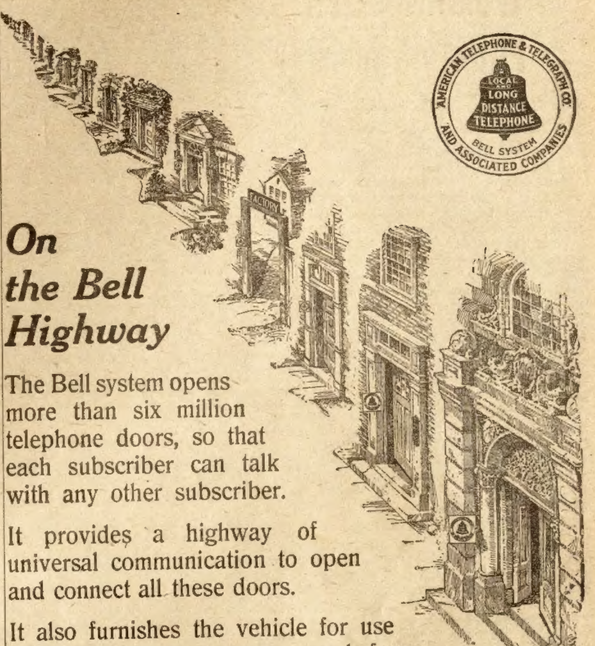
"She seems to shun the other girls, perhaps on account of her long life among the Indians."

"It must be on that account."

The besiegers had crept up behind the stumps in the clearing, and were eagerly watching for a chance to pick off the defenders.

All at once a voice assailed the settlers' ears.

"I demand the surrender of Boones-



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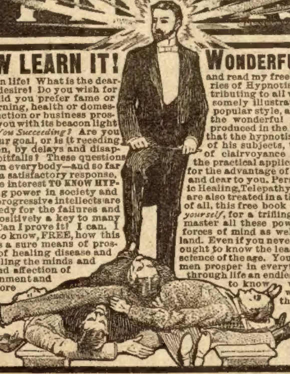

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borough in the name of King George!" said the unseen speaker. "I am Captain Duncan of the British army, and I can promise mercy if you surrender."

Daniel Boone heard the voice and mounted to the stockade.

"We don't acknowledge the authority of King George," said he, in clear and thrilling tones. "It seems to me, Captain Duncan, that you are in very bad company. We refuse to surrender Boonesborough, and as for your promise of mercy, that means nothing with a lot of murdering fiends."

"Then you must take the consequences, Colonel Boone," was the retort. "If we reduce your fort, every person in it shall be put to the tomahawk!"

"We are here, sir. Boonesborough shall be defended to the last extremity, and we will give you as good as you give us.

There was no reply to these manly words, for the British captain withdrew.

All were eager to see what the coming day would bring forth. As the first arrows of morning stole through the forest, yells were heard, and the Indians showed themselves just out of range of the deadly rifles of the frontiersmen.

They were painted for war; their hideous bodies were enough to strike terror to the hearts of the women and children, for they danced in the growing light, brandishing their tomahawks and performing the scalp act in sight of all.

All at once Boone was seen approaching the spot where Jack and Justin had kept guard through the night.

"Have you seen anything of Miss McDonald?" asked the old borderer, looking up at the boys.

Their faces showed their surprise.

"Isn't she in the fort?" asked Justin.

"She cannot be found within the stockade," was the startling reply.

"It is strange —"

"What did I tell you?" interrupted the voice of Simon Kenton, as he suddenly put in an appearance. "She has slipped back to her friends with information for them."

Both Jack and Justine colored at this base insinuation.

"I cannot think that," answered Boone.

"Oh, she's as much a Shawnee as one born in a tepee," continued the famous borderer. "In truth, she's no better than Simon Girty."

This was more than Jack could stand. He leaped down from his post, and confronted Kenton in a manner which showed that every feeling was aroused.

"It is false!" he cried, stalking forward. "Lucy McDonald is no traitress. I doubt not she can be found within the fort, if the proper search is made."

"I have had the search made already," remarked Boone, calmly. "The girl is gone!"

A derisive smile lit up Kenton's features.

"If you weren't a boy, I'd throw you over the stockade for insolence!" he cried, glaring at Jack.

"That might be a task that would try Simon Kenton's strength," was the quick rejoinder.

"Well, you ought to be sent out after the girl."

Boone now interfered, and taking Kenton by the shoulder, led him away.

"I cannot believe that Lucy has deserted," said Jack, turning to his young companion. "I'm going to look for her myself."

He made a tour of the fort. The last place he visited was his own quarters, and he stopped suddenly at sight of a bit of paper fastened to the wall. Clutching it eagerly, he went to the light.

"I hope you will forgive me," he read. "My Indian mother calls me, and I must obey, though I fear it means death for me to go back. LUCY McDONALD."

The paper nearly fell from Jack's hand.

This capital story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Kansan's Method of Dunning.

A young merchant in Smith Center found a way to make slow-paying customers dig up. For a long time he sent out monthly duns urging prompt settlement, but little if any attention was paid to them. Getting impatient, he sent an enlarged bill to an old lady who had been owing him three or four months and the effect was almost magical. She came in snorting mad the next day with the bill in her hand and the way she went after the young man for trying to swindle her brought the blushes to his cheeks.

He finally made her believe the error was unintentional, and she settled on the spot for what she owed. Since then the young man sends out bills of about twice their proper size to slow creditors, and he says it brings them in every time and invariably mad all over at his attempt to cheat them. He says you can even make a dead-beat wrathful by dunning him for a larger amount than he owes.

* * *

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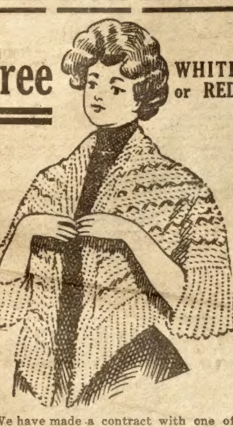

We have made a contract with one of the big mills for a lot of woolen shawls.

We are going to give these shawls away to our readers.

The shawls are made of woolen yarn. They come in two colors, white or red. These shawls can be used in many ways; as a shoulder shawl, like that shown in the cut, or they can be used to throw over the head.

Probably nothing is so useful in a home as a shawl like this. Just the thing for changeable weather. It is very handy to throw on the head when you run into your neighbor's house. Fine to wrap the baby in. Throw it over your shoulders when sitting in a draft.

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The Face in the Storm

(Continuend from page twenty.)

lar inquiries. The Rev. Walling has held his secret at the expense of his own liberty, but the assassin himself must be made to tell.

"Now, Vincent Leichtman," continued Durkin, "are you protecting any man? Was there any other man in that house?"

"No, my God, no!" said Vincent. "There was no one."

"Then, Vincent Leichtman," said Durkin, "you murdered your sister."

Vincent leaped to his feet and saw a revolver in Durkin's hand calmly pointed at him. At that moment there was a roll of thunder. In the interest of the tragic situation no one had noticed the approach of the storm. Again the lightning and the thunder.

"God! That face! There it is," exclaimed Vincent, as he saw his own reflection in the placid water.

Before Durkin could prevent it, he had leaped into the stream. I was out from my hiding-place and grappling with the wretched man in the deep pool. He struggled to release my hold upon him, but with his arms pinioned I brought him ashore, and Durkin aided me in taking him out. With the water dripping from him he raised his hands as in defeat.

"Yes, let me tell," he said, as we watched his pitiful attitude. "I am not Vincent Leichtman. Years ago, when Henry Leichtman and his sister, then a little girl, came to America, Vincent was left at the home of my father, his uncle.

"When he reached maturity he decided to come to America, also. On the night before he was to have sailed I killed him. This I did in a trivial quarrel. As I was concealing the body, I was partially stunned by a stroke of lightning. Recovering quickly from this, I took Vincent's passports, his baggage, and various belongings, which included the Leichtman family Bible, and came across the ocean in his place. All had supposed that Vincent Leichtman had sailed for America, but the mysterious disappearance of his cousin, William Brauer, was never solved. Henry Leichtman and his sister received me in the belief that I was their brother, so long had it been since they had seen him, and I lived at their home as such.

"Ever since that first awful deed I have been possessed of a madness which at times impelled me to kill, and I had no resisting power. A year ago I killed the timekeeper at the mine, and just as you have described it, I murdered Alma Leichtman. Walling is innocent, as I have said all through, and I am ready to make whatever atonement——"

At this moment the very heavens were parted by a blinding flash. When after the shock Durkin and I staggered to our feet the confessed murderer lay still. The face of the storm had forever vanished.

* * * * *

The Rev. Walling was released from imprisonment upon the affidavits of Durkin and myself and some further proof corroborating the confession found in the effects of the murderer.

Durkin, with my permission, used the story of how the Rev. Walling had once befriended me, and credited his release to my efforts to pay a debt of gratitude, taking none of the credit for the solution of the strange murder mystery for himself. They called me plain Manning before that, but it is Captain Manning now.

The End.

* * *

No Legal Advice.

"I see that you are a real estate man," said the caller, as he entered the office of a dealer, "but you are probably posted in the law enough to answer a question. If so, I am willing to pay for it."

"I give no legal opinions, sir!" was the reply.

"But this is a very simple matter."

"But you must go to a lawyer."

"But there isn't one within a mile of here."

"I can't help that."

"The question simply is——"

"Sir, I positively refuse."

"Oh, well, if you are so stiff as all this I'll have to go elsewhere, but I must confess to being a little surprised."

"You are not as surprised as I was about ten years ago," said the dealer. "A man who suspected that a neighbor was stealing his stove wood came to me and asked if he hadn't a legal right to load a stick or two with gunpowder. I told him that he had."

"And he went ahead on your opinion?"

"He did, and a week later I also went ahead. The wife of the suspected wood-stealer was a washerwoman who went out by the day. One evening my wife asked me to drop in there and engage her for the next day."

"Um."

"I was in there when one of the loaded sticks exploded and blew up the stove, the kitchen, the woman, and myself, and the doctors didn't get through tinkering at me for about three months. No, sir, you will get no legal opinion from me. Go to a regular lawyer and let him be blown through the window into the yard and lose his hair and eyebrows and have his legs roasted."

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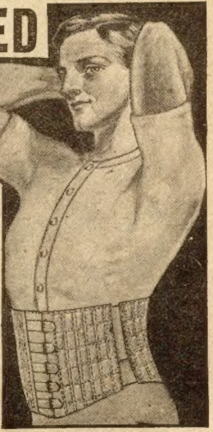

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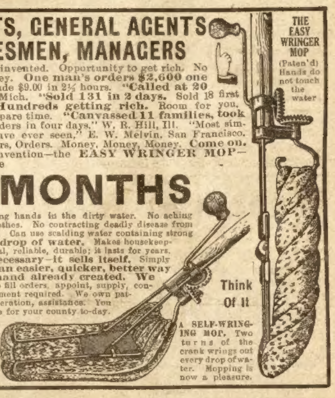
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I know woman's sufferings.
I have found the cure.

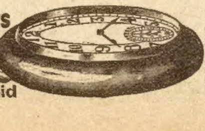
I will mail, free of any charge, **my home treatment** with full instructions to any sufferer from women's ailments. I want to tell **all** women about this cure—you, my reader, for yourself, your daughter, your mother, or your sister. I want to tell you how to cure yourselves at home without the help of a doctor. **Men can not** understand women's sufferings. What we women know **from experience,** we know better than any doctor. **I know that my home treatment** is a safe and sure cure for **Leucorrhoea or Whitish Discharges, Ulceration, Displacement or Falling of the Womb, Profuse, Scanty or Painful Periods, Uterine or Ovarian Tumors or Growths; also pains in the head, back and bowels, bearing down feelings, nervousness, creeping feeling up the spine, melancholy, desire to cry, hot flashes, weariness, kidney and bladder troubles where caused by weaknesses peculiar to our sex.**

I want to send you a **complete ten days' treatment entirely free** to prove to you that you can cure yourself at home easily, quickly and surely. Remember, that **it will cost you nothing** to give the treatment a complete trial; and if you should wish to continue, it will cost you only about 12 cts. a week, or less than 2 cts. a day. It will not interfere with your work or occupation. **Just send me your name and address,** tell me how you suffer if you wish, and I will send you the treatment for your case, entirely free, in plain wrapper, by return mail. I will also send you **free of cost,** my book—**"WOMAN'S OWN MEDICAL ADVISER"** with explanatory illustrations showing why women suffer, and how they can easily cure themselves at home. Every woman should have it, and learn to **think for herself.** Then when the doctor says—"You must have an operation," you can decide for yourself. Thousands of women have cured themselves with my home remedy. It cures **all, old or young.** To **Mothers of Daughters,** I will explain a simple home treatment which speedily and effectually cures Leucorrhoea, Green Sickness and Painful or Irregular Menstruation in Young Ladies. Plumpness and health always result from its use.

Wherever you live, I can refer you to ladies in your own locality who know and will gladly tell any sufferer that this **Home Treatment** really cures all women's diseases and makes women well, strong, plump and robust. **Just send me your address,** and the free ten days' treatment is yours, also the book. Write today, as you may not see this offer again. Address

MRS. M. SUMMERS, Box 457. - - SouthBend, Ind., U. S. A.

98 cents



Post Paid

Guaranteed 5 Years

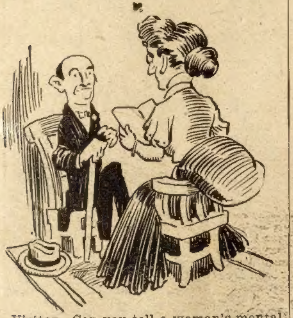
To advertise our business, make new friends and introduce our great catalogue of Elgin Watches we will send this elegant watch to any address by mail post paid for **ONLY 98 CENTS.** Regular gentlemen's size, open face, full nickel silver plated plain polished case, Arabic dial, lever escapement, stem wind and stem set, a perfect timekeeper and fully guaranteed for 5 years. Send this adv. to us with your name & address & 98c, and watch will be sent by return mail postpaid. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Send 98c today. Address

R. E. CHALMERS & CO., 538 So. Dearborn St., CHICAGO.

PICKLED PEPPERS

Pedestrians Not Insured.

He went to an insurance office to have his life insured the other day. "Do you cycle?" the insurance agent asked. "No," said the man. "Do you motor?" "No." "Do you, then, perhaps, fly?" "No, no," said the applicant, laughing. "I have no dangerous——" But the agent interrupted him, curtly. "Sorry, sir," he said, "but we no longer insure pedestrians."



Visitor—Can you tell a woman's mental attributes by her handwriting?

Woman Handwriting Expert—I can.

Visitor—Well, here's a love letter I received from a lady.

Woman Handwriting Expert—I don't need to look at it. She's looney!

Too Talkative.

It was a beautiful evening, and Ole, who had screwed up courage to take Mary for a ride, was carried away by the magic of the night.

"Mary," he asked, "will you marry me?"

"Yes, Ole," she answered softly.

Ole lapsed into a silence that at last became painful to his fiancee.

"Ole," she said desperately, "why don't you say something?"

"Ay tank," Ole replied, "they bane too much said already."

It Hurt Him.

"Gee whiz! I wish I could find the fellow who stole my umbrella——"

"Oh, cut it out! Why do you make a fuss over a little thing like that?"

"Little thing? Why, man I actually bought that umbrella."

Perfectly at Home.

"Is your bride timid and backward with your people?"

"Not a bit. She has already begun to teach sister how to look stylish and mother how to cook."

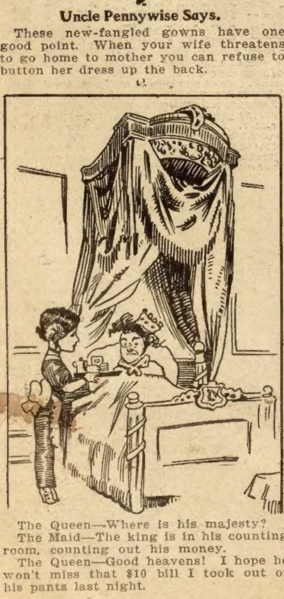
Explained.

Belshazzar saw the writing on the wall and called for his dream book.

"Writing on the wall," said the book, "signifies that some one has left a pencil where the children could get it."

Uncle Pennywise Says.

These new-fangled gowns have one good point. When your wife threatens to go home to mother you can refuse to button her dress up the back.



The Queen—Where is his majesty?

The Maid—The king is in his counting room, counting out his money.

The Queen—Good heavens! I hope he won't miss that $10 bill I took out of his pants last night.

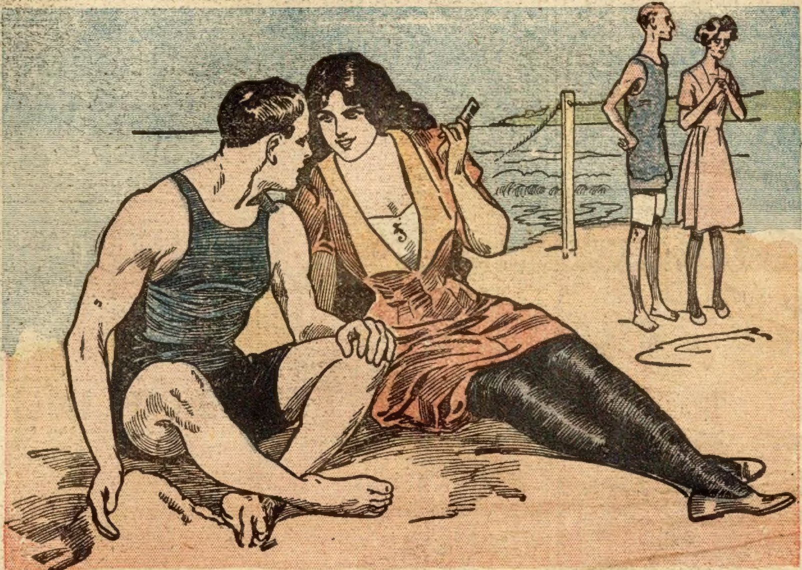
LET US MAKE YOU F

50-Cent Box Free!

We Will Prove at Our Own Expense That It Is No Longer Necessary to Be Thin Scrawny and Undeveloped.

WE INVITE EVERY THIN MAN and WOMAN HERE

Every Reader of The Chicago Ledger Who is Run Down, Nervous or Underweight, to Get Fat at Our Expense.



"Gee! Look at that pair of skinny scarecrows! Why don't they try Sargol?"

This is a generous offer to every thin man or woman reader of The Chicago Ledger. We positively guarantee to increase your weight to your own satisfaction or no pay. Think this over—think what it means. At our own risk, we offer to put 10, 15, yes, 30 pounds of good, solid "stay there" flesh on your bones, to fill out hollows in cheeks, neck or bust, to get rid of that "peaked" look, to rejuvenate and revitalize your whole body until it tingles with vibrant energy; to do this without drastic diet, "tonics," severe physical culture "stunts," detention from business or any irksome requirements—if we fail it costs you nothing.

We particularly wish to hear from the excessively thin, those who know the humiliation and embarrassment which only skinny people have to suffer in silence. We want to send a free 50-cent package of our new discovery to the people who are called "slats" and "bean poles," to bony women, whose clothes never look "anyhow," no matter how expensively dressed, to the skinny men who fail to gain social or business recognition on account of their starved appearance. We care not whether you have been thin from birth, whether you have lost flesh through sickness, how many flesh builders you have experimented with. We take the risk and assume it cheerfully. If we can not put pounds and pounds of healthy flesh on your frame we don't want your money.

How can we do this? We will tell you. Science has discovered a remarkable concentrated treatment which increases cell growth, the very substance of which our bodies are made—a treatment that makes indigestion and other stomach troubles disappear as if by magic and makes an old dyspeptic or a sufferer from weak nerves or lack of vitality feel like a 2-year-old. This new treatment which has proved a boon to every thin person, is called **Sargol.** Don't forget the name—**"S-A-R-G-O-L."** Nothing like it has ever been produced before. It is a revelation to women who have never been able to appear stylish in anything they wore because of their thinness. It is a godsend to every man who is under weight or is lacking in nerve force or energy. If you want a beautiful and well-rounded figure of symmetrical proportions, of which you can feel justly proud —if you want a body full of throbbing life and energy, write The Sargol Company, 100-P, Herald Building, Binghamton, N. Y., to-day, and we will send you, absolutely free, a 50c box of Sargol that will prove all we claim. Take one with every meal, and in five minutes after you take the first concentrated tablet of this precious product it will commence to unfold its virtues, and it has by actual demonstration often increased the weight at the rate of one pound a day. But you say you want proof. Well, here you are. Here is the statement of those who have tried—who have been convinced—and who will swear to the virtues of this marvelous preparation:

WHAT SARGOL HAS DONE FOR OTHERS

When we mail you the Free 50-cent package of Sargol, we will send you copies of letters received from grateful patrons, reporting actual gains in solid healthy permanent flesh, of from ten to over thirty pounds.

We give here a few interesting figures from reports which are being received daily.

REV. GEORGE W. DAVIS says:

"I have made a faithful trial of the Sargol treatment and must say it has brought to me new life and vigor. I have gained twenty pounds and now weigh 170 pounds, and what is better, I have gained the days of my boyhood. It has been the turning point of my life. My health is now fine. I don't have to take any medicine at all and never want to again."

MRS. A. I. RODENHEISER writes:

"I have gained immensely since I took Sargol, for I only weighed about 106 pounds when I began using it and now I weigh 130 pounds, so really this makes 24 pounds. I feel stronger and am looking better than ever before, and now I carry rosy cheeks, which is something I could never say before.

"My old friends who have been used to seeing me with a thin, long face, say that I am looking better than they have ever seen me before, and father and mother are so well pleased to think I have got to look so well and weigh so heavy for me."

F. GAGNON writes:

"Here is my report since taking the Sargol treatment. I am a man 67 years of age and was all run down to the very bottom. I had to quit work as I was so weak. Now, thanks to Sargol, I look like a new man. I gained 22 pounds with 26 days' treatment. I cannot tell you how happy I feel. All my clothes are getting too tight. My face has a good color and I never was so happy in my life."

C E. Crouner	gained	15	lbs.	in	30	days.
Thomas Davis	"	10	"	"	16	"
Leonore Patton	"	16	"	"	30	"
Mrs. Seim	"	13	"	"	20	"
Mrs. A. Arnott	"	10	"	"	40	"
F. A. Myrick	"	20	"	"	30	"
Philip Drapeau	"	9	"	"	30	"
Mrs. S. E. Murray	"	30	"	"	40	"
Mary Bland	"	18	"	"	40	"
W. W. Allis	"	36	"	"	50	"
Wm. Carmichael	"	5	"	"	10	"
Arthur Stewart	"	5	"	"	12	"
Mrs. C. Craig	"	13	"	"	30	"
Mrs. N. Galliger	"	18	"	"	35	"

Send to day for our free 50-cent package and let us prove that

SARGOL SHOULD DO THE SAME FOR YOU

This treatment increases the red corpuscles in the blood, strengthens the nerves and puts the digestive tract into such shape that your food is assimilated and turned into good, solid, healthy flesh instead of passing through the system undigested and unassimilated. It is a thoroughly scientific principle, this Sargol, and builds up the thin, weak and debilitated without any nauseous dosing. In many conditions it is better than cod liver oil and certainly is much pleasanter to take.

Send for the 50-cent box today. Convince us by your prompt acceptance of this offer that you are writing in good faith and really desire to gain in weight. The 50-cent package which we will send you free will be an eye-opener to you. We send it that you may see the simple, harmless nature of our new discovery, how easy it is to take, how you gain flesh privately without knowledge of friends or family until you astonish them by the prompt and unmistakable results.

We could not publish this offer in The Chicago Ledger if we were not prepared to live up to it. It is only the astounding results of our new method of treatment that make such an offer and such a guarantee possible on our part. So cut off the coupon today and mail it at once to The Sargol Company, 100-P, Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y., and please inclose 10c with your letter to help pay distribution expenses. Take our word, you'll never regret it.

FREE COUPON

COME EAT WITH US AT OUR EXPENSE

This coupon entitles any thin person to one 50c. package of Sargol, the concentrated Flesh Builder (provided you have never tried it), and that 10c. is enclosed to cover postage, packing, etc. Read our advertisement printed above, and then put 10c. in stamps in letter to-day, with this coupon, and the full 50c. package will be sent to you by return of post. Address: The Sargol Company, 100-P, Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y. Write your name and address plainly, and

PIN THIS COUPON TO YOUR LETTER.